

COUNTRY LIFE

VOL. XXIX.—No. 742

SATURDAY, MARCH 25th, 1911.

PRICE SIXPENCE. BY POST, 6D.
[REGISTERED AT THE G.P.O. AS A NEWSPAPER.]



RITA MARTIN.

THE HON. VENETIA BARING.

74, Baker Street, W.



THE Journal for all interested in
Country Life and Country Pursuits.

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TASTE IN FOOD.

VERY little account seems to be taken of the principal obstacle in the way of those who zealously advocate food reform. This is the indiscriminating taste of the British public. There will always be coteries and little circles of men and women who are most fastidious about their food, and who regard a meal as an almost sacramental institution. But outside of these circles there is proof enough and to spare that the average consumer is pretty much in the habit of eating what is set before him and asking no questions, particularly if some medical authority be quoted in favour of the particular food he is eating. The doctor says, for example, that Standard bread is the most nourishing and healthy bread to eat, and as long as it retains the name of "Standard" the average consumer does not seem to know the difference between a beautifully-cooked loaf and one that is of the consistency of a suet dumpling. This is even more true of such an article of diet as milk, which is served up with every possible defect. With butter the case is even worse. We have proved by analysis that a very large number of households and many of the most luxurious restaurants and exclusive clubs in London are content with butter that is neither pure, clean nor well made.

If we were to follow this line of thought out in other directions, the same results would be obtainable. Grocers seem to be aware, for instance, that in regard to an article of such general consumption as tea there is little or no discrimination on the part of the public. Many of the stores that are supposed to supply the well-to-do middle-classes do not have a really fine tea on their lists or a

good tea. It is the same with coffee. Anyone who desires to have it pure and well-flavoured must go to a specialist's. Those who provide for the public wants seem to have learned by experience that there is nothing to be gained by supplying a perfect product. The gross appetite which is characteristic of many classes of our countrymen and countrywomen makes no fine distinctions in its eating, nor does it do so in the matter of drink. The disturbance that is going on at present in the champagne districts in France would never have arisen if the consumers had been able to distinguish between champagne and the sparkling wines that have been sold as champagne. Whatever has been gained in regard to the purity of this wine has been due not to the purchaser, but to the shippers, who, during the last twenty years at least, have spared no trouble in order to see that the brand offers a true description of the wine. It used to be freely said, and as there is no smoke without fire we can scarcely imagine that there was reason to dispute it, that the cheaper sorts of champagne were produced by doctoring cider; but this practice has been altogether eliminated by the shippers. They still have to deal with the great difficulty of distinguishing between the sparkling wine produced in certain localities, or rather in certain vineyards, which are not, properly speaking, champagne vineyards, and the genuine article. Of our native drinks it would, perhaps, be necessary to exclude beer from the list of articles of which the British consumer knows nothing. He really has got into his head a conception of what good beer should be like, and the quality of the beer is, accordingly, taken on the whole, very good. The beef with which the beer is supposed to be taken is not subjected to so close a scrutiny. Between chilled beef from abroad and a joint of home-bred, home-fed Aberdeen-Angus there are many consumers who see very little difference. It is the same to an even greater degree with cheese, which once used to form so considerable a part of the poor man's diet. Why Colonial cheese should be so inferior in quality we have never exactly known, unless it be that those who make it are so pre-occupied with the idea of capturing the cheap market that they pay no heed to the excellence of their product; but the fact is that there are no foreign or Colonial cheeses that compete on their own lines with our Stiltons, Cheddars and so forth. Of course, we exclude from this comparison such cheeses as Roquefort and Camembert, which are special products of the districts from which they come. But our reference is chiefly to those huge consignments of cheeses that are sent into this country to compete with those made at home, and are, as a matter of fact, imitations of them.

These are facts which are scarcely open to denial, and they are very important from the point of view of those who see that improvement in national physique must to a large extent depend upon an improvement in the character of the food we eat. It is in vain to establish cookery classes and teach our village maidens the secrets of the cuisine without first of all producing and establishing a finer taste in food. This is not by any means a taste for finer or more luxurious food. It is an axiom that simple articles of diet are by far the best, so that we do not advocate by any means a more luxurious or a more expensive style of living. In fact, all that we have said would apply as effectively to the simplest as to the most complex diet. Take vegetarianism as an example. We have nothing to say for it or against it on abstract principles. If anyone thinks that vegetables are more suitable or more nourishing than meat, it would be very foolish not to live on them; but it seems absurd that he should elevate this individual taste into a creed to be preached. What we were going to say, however, was that the great difficulty about vegetables is that the public has no adequate knowledge of fineness in quality and is content with very inferior methods of cooking. In very few even of the resorts of the rich in London are vegetables prepared in an appetising and skilful manner, and in the other places they are simply a horror. The beginning of the subject is to get into the mind of the consumer an idea of how absolutely pure and good vegetables should taste. We are afraid the opposite course is too often pursued. The British citizen, with the stubborn determination of his race, sits down to eat unpalatable food not because he likes it, but simply because it is doctor's orders.

Our Portrait Illustration.

THE frontispiece this week is a portrait of the Hon. Venetia Baring, whose appointment as a Maid-of-Honour to The Queen was recently announced. The Hon. Venetia Baring is the eldest daughter of Lord Ashburton.

. It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens, or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received the Editor will esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.

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• NOTES •

FELICITY of speech and clearness of thought marked the reply of King George V. to the address made to him by the deputation of the Tercentenary of the Authorised Version of the Bible. The address, which probably owed something to the Archbishop of Canterbury, had pointed out that the growth and strength of the Empire owe much to the English Bible; it had referred to the standard of pure speech set by it, and to its modification of the laws of the realm and effect on the national character. The most telling phrase in His Majesty's reply was that in which he likened the appearance of the Authorised Version to a broad light coming in the darkness. It really meant the emancipation of the race. If King James I. had been associated with no other great deed, he would still, as the King said, deserve honour for having watched over and directed that undertaking. The enfranchisement of the people was due to two things—the Reformation and the Authorised Version. The King was indeed right to refer to the latter as “a noble inheritance” and “the first of national treasures.”

Modern excavation continues to unfold to us its revelations of the past. One of the most striking was described by Professor Pinches at a meeting at the Victoria Institute on Monday evening. He told of a little tablet that has been found and translated by Professor H. B. Hilprecht. It was three and three-quarter inches long by two and three-eighths inches in width, and its greatest thickness seven-eighths of an inch. According to Professor Hilprecht and other eminent Assyriologists, it belongs to the period between 2137 and 2005 B.C. Thus it is four thousand years old, and forms an addition to the many references to a great flood found in ancient Scriptures. According to Professor Hilprecht's rendering the writing contains these passages: “I will loosen the confines of heaven and earth; I will make a flood, and it will sweep away all men together.” Then followed instructions to “build a great ship,” and that “every beast of the field and bird of the heavens should be brought therein.” The correspondence between this record and the story of Noah and the Ark is too close to escape attention.

Mr. Tregarthen and the Selborne Society will obtain plenty of sympathy for their proposal that the Government should set aside a wild tract of country as a sanctuary for birds. At the same time, the Government, when it is appealed to for land, will be able to point out that Great Britain is not exactly in the same position as the United States of America or South Africa, in so far that there is no very large tract of undeveloped land available. Obviously, a sanctuary among the wild mountain scenery of Wales, Scotland or Ireland would fail of its effect, because birds would not stay in it unless a generous food supply were provided. Further, it is very doubtful if any sanctuary would have the effect of preserving the species of which Mr. Tregarthen made particular mention—the buzzard, the peregrine, the raven, the chough and the kite. Not one of these birds was persecuted until it became naturally so rare as to be considered a prize of the collector. Ornithologists have never been able to supply any good and substantial reasons why the raven, for example,

should have become so scarce and its relative, the carrion crow, continue to abound.

There are many parts of the country in which the raven has been strictly preserved for the last quarter of a century and more, and the records of at least one place with which we are very familiar seem to show that the bird is losing its vitality as a breeding species. In many years no young have been raised to maturity at all, in others a solitary bird has reached the fledgeling stage. We are speaking here of an eyrie situated in the middle of a moorland estate owned by a most zealous naturalist, who never chooses a keeper or an outdoor servant of any kind without an enquiry as to his love of wild life. Food, seclusion, all that the bird wants, are provided, and yet the records show that the breed is naturally dying out. Nor has anyone yet explained why the kite which used to throng the market-places of London and to be numerous on the roads leading out of it, has grown almost extinct. The chough goes and its cousin, the jackdaw, remains, and no one can tell the reason. The collector does not begin to collect till rarity has rendered the specimen of value.

The idea, therefore, of a sanctuary for birds as a means of preserving those which are becoming extinct is scarcely tenable. At the same time, there are many other advantages which ought to be considered. Such a space would provide the best means possible for studying the nesting and other habits of British birds. It would be the resort of all who love wild life in a free and natural condition. We all know that the keeping of animals in confinement is open to very serious objection, and there are many who, without being in any proper sense of the word sentimental, nevertheless greatly dislike to see, either in a private house or in an exhibition, our beautiful wild birds caged and confined. The larks, thrushes, blackbirds, finches and even migrants like the nightingale and the cuckoo, seem out of place in a cage. Children, especially, should be taught to admire them in their native haunts and to study their untamed ways rather than to nourish a pride in making pets of them. For that reason, if for no other, the proposal to establish a national sanctuary for birds is worthy of support.

THE BELLS OF ST. CLEMENTS.

I crept last night down Fleet Street,
The city loomed behind.
“It sucks from me my life,” I cried,
“And leaves me but the rind.”
But the brave bells of St. Clements,
They rang their great ding dong,
“A thousand more have wept as sore,”
Uprose their steadfast song,
“And come back glad to-morrow, lad,
For that's how men grow strong.”

I strode to-day up Fleet Street,
The city shone before.
“By great St. Paul I'll have it all,
I'll have it all,” I swore.
And the brave bells of St. Clements,
They flung their glad ding dong,
Like caps in air to see me there,
And sang their lusty song,
“For so life swings to him who sings—
And that's how men grow strong.”

H. H. BASHFORD.

It is very amusing to note the controversies that have been going on about the way in which a wild bird learns its note, and, evidently, there are many people who think that the parent bird holds a sort of singing class in which it teaches its offspring to sing its own song. The objection to this theory is that the majority of bird parents, when their offspring are barely able to take care of themselves and quite incapable of singing, peck and drive them away. Moreover, any boy who has nursed little chicks and brought them up so tame that they would sit on his shoulder and pick food from his hand, like Lesbia's sparrow, is perfectly well aware that in due time the song comes to the bird, and it is always the song of its kind. The tame thrush never by chance sings the blackbird's song, nor does the lark whistle like a canary. Without anything to imitate, each sings after its kind. It is quite true that many birds are extremely imitative, and a starling, especially, will whistle any tune that it hears. Of course, that has to be said with a qualification, because those who make a point of teaching tunes to birds get up very early in the morning to do so. At three or four

o'clock of a summer morning the bird's attention is more easily captured and retained than it is when the world is all astir. This imitation is, of course, analogous with our speech; while the natural note of the bird is analogous with those sounds which a baby would produce if brought up by the deaf and dumb. It would scream with pain and gurgle with laughter when pleased. It would evolve notes connected with all its emotions, but it would never learn to speak. Speech is an artificial product as distinguished from the inarticulate sounds that come direct from Nature and inheritance.

What might lead to very great developments is the new departure in the business of insurance against natural risk. The scheme is to grant insurance against rain. It applies at present to some sixty or seventy seaside resorts. The holiday-maker may, by the payment of a moderate premium, insure himself against bad weather. That is to say, if it should rain for the days of his stay, he will find himself considerably in pocket as the result of his holiday. The working of the plan ought to prove simple enough. The deciding instrument will be the rain-gauge. If the rainfall exceed a certain amount, the companies will automatically pay their customers the sum agreed upon, they taking all the trouble. As the rainfall is already officially recorded, there ought to be no occasion for dispute, and, no doubt, the accountants have so arranged their terms that the business will prove lucrative to the insurance companies while guaranteeing a return to those who have the misfortune to encounter bad weather.

But, obviously, there is no limit to the scope of insurance conducted on these lines. If the scheme were adapted to suit the purpose of agriculture, it would tend to steady what in its nature has hitherto always been more or less of a gambling trade. It is true the farmer himself, as a rule, bears very little resemblance in character to the gambler; he is brought up to believe in the virtue of hard work, ceaseless industry, and a frugality that approaches parsimony; but in this climate he may dig never so well or sow never so wisely, yet the result depends to an extraordinary extent upon the weather. Rain is a potential destroyer of the fruits of the best cultivation possible, and if its effects could be insured against, the result, as we have said, would be to eliminate a large element of risk from the calling of the husbandman.

It is difficult to get the exact personal equation of the man who pays conscience money, yet he exists to an extent that yields an average of about £2,000 a year to the Revenue, according to the particulars given to the House of Commons by Mr. Hobhouse. In some years this sum rises to over £3,000, and in others sinks to about £1,500; but the sum mentioned may be taken as a fair average. We all know the acknowledgments that appear from time to time in the papers showing that this very shy individual likes best to send his remittance in halved Bank of England notes. He is most careful to preserve his anonymity, for which he may have two possible reasons. In the first place, it may give the vigilant tax-collector an opportunity of increasing his assessment in the following year, and, in the second, he may be afraid of undesirable results following from the confession of wrong-doing. Perhaps it would be well for the Government to proclaim the forgiveness of anyone who frankly confesses to have gone wrong and makes what amends are in his power, on the Christian principle that is applied to the wicked man who turns away from the wickedness which he has committed. But, on the other hand, we cannot help feeling a sneaking sympathy with those who evade the strict inquisition into private affairs on which the Income Tax is based. We believe it to be generally recognised as a grievance.

When the International Congress of Chambers of Commerce was sitting in London last year, reference was made in these notes to the proposals which were brought before it to alter the calendar so that Easter should be a fixed instead of a movable festival. Now it is announced that the Petition Committee of the Reichstag will propose a resolution that "The Imperial Chancellor is requested to take such steps as will, in compliance with the wishes of the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and of the Tradesmen's and Workmen's Unions, result in the appointment of a definite Sunday on which Easter shall be celebrated." The Reichstag has had such petitions presented to it several times before; but on this occasion, as the principle was approved of at the International Congress, and as the Ecclesiastical authorities have no objection, there is every likelihood that Easter in Germany will soon be held on a fixed day. The first Sunday after April 4th has been

suggested, and a Bill much to the same effect has been presented to the House of Commons.

Mr. Capablanca is the new hero of the chess world. He does what he is expected to do with almost too deadly certainty. It cannot have been much more than twenty-four months since, as a raw lad of nineteen, he emerged from obscurity and began to play the most brilliant games of chess, crowning his first campaign by defeating the very able American champion, Mr. Marshall, in a special match. At the San Sebastian tournament which has just been concluded, he for the first time came into competition with the famed and proved European veterans, and he emerged triumphantly from the ordeal. It is true that the margin of victory was represented by only half a point, but this was enough in a meeting which included the most famous chess-masters of the day; men like Schlechter, who made an equal score with Lasker for the championship of the world; Dr. Tarrasch, who has won more International championships than any man living; Rubinstein, a young Russian whose meteoric career has been as startling as that of Capablanca himself, and who, by the by, was the only player to defeat the winner; and Duras, the young champion who, unfortunately, was out of form and unable to do justice to himself. We shall probably hear more of Capablanca, and so will Dr. Lasker, the present champion of the world.

THE ECLIPSE.

Endymion's mistress bends to-night
From that high heavenly throne,
Where queen-like—yet how softly bright!
She reigns, but reigns alone:
Her iridescent bow she hides,
Her scarf of opal grain,
And like a mortal maiden glides
To meet a mortal swain.

She leaves her orb untenanted—
Her pallid vestal fire
Untended, like a lamp unfed
Must lingeringly expire:
While dauntless thro' the darkling waste,
The horror of eclipse,
She steals an earthly joy to taste
From earthly lover's lips!

GEORGE DOUGLAS.

We are very often consulted as to our opinion on the best material for the making of garden paths. It is evident that the answer must depend a good deal on the locality, and the kind of stone suitable for the purpose which it supplies. Some kinds of sandstone, notably that which occurs in the Wealdon clay formation, rolls down to an excellent surface for light traffic, but are not durable enough to be of the slightest use where carts or carriages of any weight have to travel over it. We should like to say a word emphatically in favour of brick paths for small gardens and gardens attached to small houses. The more porous kind of brick is better than the impervious kind often sold as "paving brick," because it mellows much more pleasantly with the weather. Where the bricks have to bear any considerable weight, as in a stable-yard, it is necessary that they should be "grouted" or grounded in cement, but where the paths are only to be used for walking on or for no heavier traffic than a wheelbarrow, the bricks will last quite level enough if set in a bed of a few inches' depth of sand. The making of a path of this kind is a very simple matter, which any labourer can perform.

Spring salmon angling seems to have been going on quite merrily. Snow and rain towards the end of February came just right to help rivers when they had fallen very low. The wiser measures in regard to the making of passes, control of nets and so on, which have been coming more and more into vogue, are telling their sure tale, and it seems as if salmon angling in these islands, after many years on the downward grade, really is beginning to improve generally. The Wye continues in a remarkable way to respond to the freer access to its upper waters which is permitted by the removal of nets at the mouth—a salmon of forty-three pounds has been caught with the rod this season at Boughrood—and almost every river where this enlightened policy has been pursued is fully justifying it. The Deveron appears to be a disappointing exception, excellent trout river as it always is. But Mr. Calderwood pointed out long ago that a shifting bar at its mouth made it difficult at times for salmon to get up, and it looks very much as if some drastic measures ought to be taken to keep the channel well open there if the Deveron is to be anything like the salmon river that its fine pools indicate that it should be.

THE INEVITABLE MARCH SNOWFALL.

LAST week we printed from one of our poetical contributors an ingenious plea to the Clerk of the Weather that he would not forget to send us snow in March. Her humorous tale of woe was that in 1909 she wrote some verses under this title which had found no home, that in 1910 she had revised them, and once more sent them forth to try their luck in Fleet Street and the Strand. But with no success. Hope and poetry are closely allied, and her prayer was that in 1911 snow would once more come in March and give the verses another chance. At the time nothing of the kind seemed at all likely to occur. The "roaring month" had been in his kindest mood; correspondents were writing week by week about the exceptional mildness of the spring. No one dreamed that the photographs we show could be taken as they were in mid-March. Birds, creatures of the weather, had anticipated their time of mating, and robins and thrushes were incubating their eggs or feeding their young. Winter appeared to be beating a retreat, and the faint heralding of spring was

But to return, the poem was in the pages which go to press early, that is to say, while March still was in the most amiable mood, beaming on the low-born songster and gradually leading out the shivering new grass. Then came one of those sudden and violent changes that our climate has rendered familiar. On awaking one morning we felt conscious of a coming change in the atmosphere. The morning at sunrise bore no outward sign of what was impending except that around a central field of blue-grey clouds were displayed in a pattern that was almost mathematical. Although before us lay a walk of five miles, it did not seem necessary to take the ordinary precautions against excessive moisture. Showers with bright intervals appeared to be a reasonable forecast. But in a surprisingly brief period the clouds closed in on the sun and hid it. Every patch of blue was covered, and then the snow began to fall. It was very dry snow. Although the garden thermometer was four degrees above freezing-point, the snow was like white powder, and the north wind, that began to blow very keenly,



Ward Muir

A SPRINKLING OF SNOW.

Copyright

growing louder every day. The mornings were bright with sunshine and jubilant with bird song. Larks were pouring their melody over the green wheat, and thrushes perched on telegraph wires added their amorous descant. It would sound more poetic to say that they "carolled on leaflet and spray"; but truth is stranger than fiction, and anyone walking along the highway can see that birds have taken very kindly to the telegraph wires. From the rookery in an avenue of tall lime trees the rooks fly down to the telegraph wires and jabber to one another concerning the seed-field they mean to plunder, like the "corbies" in the ballad, "where sall we gang and dine to-day?" Small feathered poets with straight distended wings fly up to the wires to blow their little bugle note of a lyric and float softly back to grass or hedgerow, just as though they were human artists of the music-hall type doing a short turn. Where is their audience? Probably the singer thinks of none except a hen "in sober russet clad" who pops about the thorn bush raking for worms or seeds, and pays, or pretends to pay, no attention to her loud and persistent wooer. Later on, when the brood is fledged, the young will make an early flight to the wires.

whirled it along the smooth and well-kept highway like summer dust. This, however, was only at the beginning. The flakes increased in size every instant until they were coming down like huge feathers. Not for a moment since has there been a sign of spring in the air. The snow did not lie long—it seldom does in March; but the storms have been repeated again and again. For a while they clothed the landscape in white and reproduced all the characteristics of a hard winter. Then the melting process begins, the pure white merges into grey, patches of black earth appear, and the snow finally melts. But the whole process ends only to begin again.

Our contributor's anxiety about the coming of snow in March is purely fanciful in its character. Behind it all we can read her certainty that this type of weather is absolutely certain to come some time in the month; and it is not altogether to be regretted, especially if we consider the character of recent years. Some hold that the seasons are actually changing; but it is very difficult to realise what the weather of our ancestors used to be. They made a great deal of such snow as fell, and in olden times the inconvenience and restraint of winter must have been



T. Reuley.

SNOW-FRINGED BANKS.

Copyright.

much greater than to-day. In fact, the modern man feels winter very little indeed. It does not restrict his travelling in the slightest. Wind, rain or snow makes no difference whatever to the railway, and even the motor can get along on the excellent roads without much difficulty save in exceptional circumstances. We have also invented, or, if not invented, greatly popularised, many outdoor pastimes that help to make the dark days fly past almost as quickly as those of summer. Golf, which, with a section of the population, has become the most popular outdoor sport, is not seriously interrupted by winter. Enthusiasts play it when the course is white with snow; at any rate, they are said to do so. Our own experience is that a little practice goes a long way when the ball runs the risk of encountering

an unexpected hazard in a snow reef. Still, the days are so few during an average winter in which snow is lying on the ground that they could almost be counted on the fingers of one hand, and a sharp frost is no hindrance to golf.

In old literature we read a great deal about sliding, skating, snowballing and other winter frolics; but the astute modern has extracted the kernel of these and flung away the husk. He, and we ought to say she as well, finds that ordinary roller-skating is as pleasant as any natural skating, and can be enjoyed under much pleasanter conditions. Moreover, one does not go to it with the dread of a thaw hanging like black care over one's enjoyment. Snow pastimes never were more popular than at the present moment; but it has become fashionable to

go abroad for their enjoyment. Switzerland never had so many English visitors as this year, and there are places in Norway where the ski and the toboggan are still yielding delight to visitors from these shores. People who are prevented from one reason or another from going abroad for their enjoyments, nevertheless can find plenty of them within easy reach, so that the discomfort of winter is now reduced to the minimum. One result is that there is not quite the same burst of joy when the rain is over and gone and the time of the singing of birds is come. For, although we keep the records of the weather with an accuracy never dreamed of by our elders, we are, to a large extent, compelled to draw large generalisations from a casual reference here and there in an old story book or an old poem.

When the monk of Reading produced his famous cuckoo song it is possible enough that he was inspired by one of those delicious mornings which occasionally follow a long period of chilly and damp weather. It may surely be surmised that, if all the mornings were fine, he would have become so accustomed to them that it would have been impossible to get up steam enough to write with the liveliness and inspiration of this immortal little poem.

If we are to judge by our own experience, the bitter east wind, of which complaint is rife at the moment when these rambling thoughts are being transferred to paper, was just the same in old times. There is a proverb which says that if the wind blow from the East on a certain day in March it will



Ward Muir.

THE ROAD TO THE FARM.

Copyright.

continue to do so till the middle of May, and that saying seems eloquent of a more prosaic side to the spring of which Dan Chaucer and the other poets sang so exquisitely. It is the inheritance of this tradition that makes the English farmer so cheerful amid such storms as those out of which we have just emerged. He does not welcome, but dreads, the premature appearance of the blossoms and buds that tell of an early spring.

He knows that damage to his crops will not be done by those frosts and snows which occur at the beginning of the season. On the contrary, they have a wholesome retarding effect. The deadly frosts are those that occur in May. They are not usually very severe, if we judge them simply by the test of temperature; but their effect is disastrous, because the young things are at that tender age when it is most easy to injure them.

RACING NOTES.

WITH the commencement of another flat-racing season comes speculation as to which of last year's two year olds are likely to distinguish themselves in the more important races of the coming year. In some—one might say in most—years we are so far assisted by a reference to the two year old form as to be able to place our fingers with some degree of certainty upon the names of at least one horse that will probably earn classic honours. But such is not the case just now; calculations, indeed, based upon the running of last season's two year olds are more likely to lead astray the searcher after truth than to guide him in the right path. Such indications as there were seemed to point to Mr. Leopold de Rothschild's Pietri as a not improbable winner of the Derby; but resumption of work has, unfortunately, revealed the fact that the good son of St. Frusquin and Pie Powder has become affected in his wind. The extent of the mischief is, perhaps, not yet known; but even under the most favourable circumstances it must to some extent detract from the racing capabilities of the colt, and for the time being we can but look upon him in the light of a factor of diminished importance in reckoning up the possibilities of the classic colts of the year. So obscure, indeed, is the solution of the problem in the light of last year's public form that one is tempted to look beyond the mere facts recorded in the books in the search for candidates for classic honours. In so doing, apart from the make and shape of the animals themselves, their growth as two year olds and, perhaps above all, their breeding will have to be considered. We may perhaps do worse than commence with King William (3),



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CYLLIUS.

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by William III. out of Glasalt, by Isinglass (3). Inbred to perhaps the best of the Bruce Lowe families, investigation of the colt's pedigree shows a concentration of stout staying blood, to which energy and vitality should be lent by the double line of Galopin. Backward and unfurnished as a two year old, Lord Derby's colt has all the size and scope of a race-horse and, taking his excellent breeding into consideration, should, if he has wintered well and made his growth in the right direction, do far better this year than last, and is, I think, to be looked upon as a formidable opponent to all and sundry in the Two Thousand Guineas, the Derby and the St. Leger.

The book says very little in favour of Cyllius (1), by Cyllene 9 out of Galeottia, for his three outings resulted in a length beating from Meleager (receiving 2lb.) in the Autumn Breeders' Foal Plate at Manchester, a neck victory over the Sceptre filly (receiving 9lb.) in the Autumn Produce Stakes at Newbury, and running third—and last—behind Alice and Sandal in the Rous Memorial Stakes, when giving 10lb. to the winner and 7lb. to the second. But the colt should do better than this, for in addition to being a fairly well-balanced, useful-looking sort, he is certainly bred on racing lines, twenty-seven out of thirty-two quarterings in his pedigree belonging to the best running or sire families, while of the remainder two come from the stout No. 19 family. He is engaged in the Two Thousand Guineas and the Derby. Stedfast (2), by Chaucer (1) out of Be Sure, by Surefoot, is a promising colt with quite a racing pedigree, and one that must be included in any list of last year's colts that are likely as three year olds to improve upon their two year old



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SEAFORTH.

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running. So, too, should mention be made of Prince Palatine (1), by Persimmon out of Lady Lightfoot, by Isinglass (3) out of the late Sir D. Cooper's famous mare, Glare. The colt is heavily engaged this year, and among the great races for which he has been nominated are the Two Thousand Guineas, the Derby, St. Leger, Grand Prix de Paris and the Jockey Club Stakes of 10,000 sovs. The extraordinary fashion in which he won the Imperial Produce Stakes at Kempton Park was duly alluded to in these notes, and it may be added that although beaten in the race for the Dewhurst Plate, he was far from being disgraced, for he was attempting to give 10lb. to King William and Phryxus; but it should be mentioned, perhaps, that at the time a good many shrewd judges came to the conclusion that it was the extra furlong rather than the weight that beat him. The fillies are even more difficult to deal with than the colts; but knowing that Sir E. Cochran's smart filly, Nicola (2), has now completely got rid of the splint that put a stop to what promised to be a brilliant two year old career, she may be expected to make a good bid for the Oaks—her only classic engagement; and another that should, from her breeding alone, be worth bearing in mind is Alice (1), a bay filly by Isinglass (3) out of Alcmena, by Ladas (1) out of Galanthes, by Galopin (3). Here is, indeed, a racing pedigree, and from such a filly much may be expected. Last season she won the Rous Memorial Stakes and the Bretby Stakes, the only races in which she ran, and among her engagements for the present year are the One Thousand Guineas, the Oaks and the St. Leger. Whether Prince San (2), by Santoi out of Regime, by Roeburn, will develop stamina as he makes his growth is a point to be settled perhaps before long; but he has, at all events, already proved to demonstration that he is possessed of a more than average turn of speed, and being, moreover, a well-shaped colt, with plenty of scope, is likely to do well in the coming season. Meleager 7, by Eager out of Mesange, by Persimmon, is heavily engaged this year, but the St. Leger is the only one of the classic races for which he has been entered. That this should be so is to some extent curious, for his breeding is not suggestive of any great staying powers; still, he was a fairly good and consistent performer last year, for out of ten attempts he had six winning brackets to his credit, and was only once unplaced. Summing up his two year old form, however, he would probably be put somewhere about 14lb. below Seaforth and some 10lb. below Pietri and St. Nat, the last a deep-girthed, good-looking colt by St. Denis out of Nathalie (3), by Royal Hampton 11.

To the prospects of the leading three year olds of the year further allusion will be made as opportunities arise for seeing them at work. Meantime, of more immediate concern is the running of Lutteur III. in the Open Steeplechase at Hurst Park on Saturday last and its bearing on the Grand National Steeplechase. When, two years ago, Mr. J. Hennessy's five year old—as he then was—came over and won the Champion Steeplechase as a preliminary to the greater honours he earned a few weeks later on at Aintree, opinions were sharply divided as to whether or no he could get safely over the big fences that bar the way of a competitor for the Grand National, and, moreover, many of the critics declared that, even if the horse stood up, his rider, Parfremont, would probably fall off should Lutteur III. make even the smallest mistake. How horse and man set criticism at defiance we know, and as regards Parfremont, if further proof of his solid qualities as a horseman were necessary, it was forthcoming on Saturday last, when a terrible blunder at a plain fence by the Stands brought Lutteur III. on to his knees, and a marvellous and instantaneous recovery was effected, creditable to the cleverness of horse and rider alike. This same blunder now leads many people to laugh at the pretensions of Mr. J. Hennessy's colt to win another "National," and they argue, too, that he took too long to beat Usury. From both of these opinions I differ. Lutteur III. is a very long-striding horse, the fence in question is awkwardly situated, and my impression was that the horse got right under it before he knew he was there. Such a mistake is not likely to occur in dealing with the big black fences at Aintree; and as to the length of time Lutteur III. took in beating Usury, all that I can say is that, after such a blunder, Parfremont, like the capable jockey that he is, steadied his horse to give him his wind and get him balanced. That done, he was simply playing with Colonel Birkin's horse, and it is impossible to estimate how much he had in hand when, after a mistake that would have put most horses out of court, he came romping home with a lead of at least six lengths. Admitting that Lutteur III.'s fencing at Hurst Park was not quite so clean and brilliant as when we first saw him in his five year old days, he will, I think, once more get safely round the Grand National course, and if he does do so, then the probabilities are that this Friday afternoon he will again be hailed the winner of the greatest honour to which a chaser can aspire.

TRENTON.



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MELEAGER.

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ST. NAT.

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PRINCE SAN.

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PASTELS IN REGENT STREET.

AT Messrs. Marchant's gallery in Regent Street Mr. J. R. K. Duff has lately been exhibiting a large collection of studies in pastel, which demonstrated the artist's control of a very elusive medium. The resuscitation of pastel has been one of the most welcome revivals of late years, and, like many other good things, it came from France. A century ago the pastellists were busy in both countries. The work of John Russell is hardly yet appreciated at its true worth, although the portraits of his predecessor, La Tour, are eagerly sought after at the Hotel Drouot. But Mr. Duff has nothing in common with these talented forerunners. His method is quite different from that of Whistler, one of the most active leaders of the revival, who wielded the chalks with an airy grace he seldom lost in his lighter essays. Mr. Duff has a heavier hand, and his pastel is at times of the thick consistency of paint. Both in technique and also largely in subject he recalls the name of another great pastellist, Léon L'hermitte. He belongs to the peasant school of J. F. Millet, and his sympathies are centred in the daily life of the peasant. A pastoralist who shuns the crowded streets for the lonely joys of Loch Lubnaig or Pwllheli Bay, he is yet a realist. He is equally at home amid the bleakest Highland pastures or the beaming farmyards of Devonshire. But always his chief concern is with the animal creation, and the human interest is rarely present.

This is at once the strength and the weakness of the collection. By concentrating his powers upon a single aspect of our myriad-sided existence he gains strength in handling. But, with so limited a point of view, a large exhibition of his work must tend towards monotony. This can probably be said with equal truth of most artists. Few pictures can be seen at their



HIGH TIDE.

best when exhibited *en masse*. These pastels certainly lose much of their charm through being crowded with a multitude of similar frames lacking variety of motive. Every picture to be appreciated properly should have a wall of its own, an ideal of perfection which we can at least counsel, if admittedly unattainable.

The dominant note of all pastoral art is one of melancholy. Why this should be so it is somewhat difficult at the moment to explain. But there is an impassive cruelty in Nature which seems to throw a gloom over the life of the fields. Agriculturists, from lord to labourer, are seldom light-hearted, and all artists, literary or pictorial, Thomas Hardy or J. F. Millet, who seek inspiration in the country-side share the common burden.

Mr. Duff does not escape, and his outlook is tinged with sadness. His best pastels are in a key of grey. In "A Tragedy" a lamb finds itself marooned upon a tiny islet of sedge, while the rising tide washes across the almost submerged fields. "High Tide" is artistically better, and the wooden bridge with the little flock crowding round the shepherd for safety lend themselves to composition.

When Mr. Duff deserts the gathering storms for the burning sun of "By the Clay Pit" he produces a vivid sketch almost too brilliant for English skies, although it is in such strong effects that the utmost pure colour can be extracted from pastel. "Milking Time" is a clever study of the interior of a barn. Through the open door streams the sun, lighting the cattle stalls. All within is dark. We can hear the ring of the chains against the mangers, the treading of the straw by a restless beast, the rhythmical munching of the animals with noses deep in fodder. This is another aspect of Nature, who, after all, is perhaps not so cruel a mother as we would fancy.

HUGH STOKES.



A TRAGEDY.



TALES OF COUNTRY LIFE.

MY CHASE OF THE IZARD.

BY
J. M. DODINGTON.



"BUT yes, monsieur, without doubt the izard is there. In approaching him lies the difficulty. The eye of a hawk, the ear of a hare, the nose of a hind—of a truth the hunter need be wary who escapes his vigilance. Nevertheless, a grand chasseur like monsieur will undoubtedly prove successful."

Having delivered himself of this last piece of amiable politeness, François departed kitchenwards in quest of the next plat of the excellent dinner with which he was serving me. The last rays of the setting sun were gilding the tops of the pine trees which clothed the sides of the narrow Pyrenean valley; through the open windows of the little *salle-à-manger* came the first faint breath of spring. In the favoured regions below, the flowers of April were blooming, but on the upland heights around the mountain inn winter tarried long. Seated, pipe in mouth, on the coping of the low stone wall around the village well, Perrin and Coupeau, two famous Basque guides, awaited the Englishman.

"Not later than six o'clock, monsieur, must we start to-morrow morning; it is a good five hours' climb. At first streak of dawn the izard seeks his feeding-grounds, towards midday he reposes, and then will be our best chance of taking him unawares."

So in the grey light of the April morning we began our toilsome march. The early-rising inhabitants of the hill village were already strolling about its one cobble-stoned street; thin spirals of pale blue smoke curled above the flat roofs; the sharp odour of burning wood filled the keen, cold air. Up the rough track through the dense pine forest, out upon the bare, rock-strewn hillside where track there was none; higher still to where the snow lay in great streaks and patches. It was a long, stiff pull. At last a wave of the arm and a warning nod from Coupeau indicated that we were approaching the haunts of the wily Pyrenean chamois. Scanning with our glasses each ridge and corrie, we cautiously advanced. Again and again we searched in vain; suddenly Coupeau grasped my arm and silently pointed upward. On a lofty pinnacle, outlined against the pale blue sky, a shapely form stood motionless. A little lower down, a dozen or more of foxy-red specks showed up among the grey boulders.

"Izard! Izard!" Coupeau whispered, hoarsely, his deep-set eyes aflame, his fingers clutching my arm like a vice. "Not a word! not a breath!"

Slowly, slowly, with infinite caution, taking advantage of each bush and boulder, of each small inequality of the ground, we wriggled our way onward and upward. We seemed to have been crawling for hours, when Coupeau thrust behind him a warning hand. Cautiously, almost imperceptibly, he moved his head until he could peer round the corner of his sheltering rock. For a tense moment he gazed, then—"Shoot! shoot!" he breathed, rather than whispered. Scarcely had my ear caught the words, when a shrill, whistling sound smote upon it like the crack of doom—there was a rapid patter of small, hard hoofs on bare rock. And I raised my head to see an empty world of sky and crag!

"Now may the—!" Coupeau shook an impotent fist at vacant space, and cursed the quick-eyed, quick-eared quarry by every saint in his calendar.

The hitherto silent Perrin smiled sardonically. "When the pomegranate is trodden under foot, it is useless to lament the juice," he said. "They are gone, pursuit is hopeless. *Eh bien*, over the frontier in the Val d'A—the izard is almost certain to be found. Let us waste no more time in idle words, but make our way thither."

"The road is long," growled Coupeau. "I doubt whether we could get back ere nightfall. Also," he raised his head

and sniffed the raw, cold air, "it seems to me that ere long the snow will descend."

Perrin shrugged his shoulders contemptuously. "There is a hamlet at the upper end of the Val d'A—, where, if need be, we could pass the night. And from it a pass to our own village. I do not say that I, myself, know the way, but a Spanish guide could easily be found. In any case it is for monsieur to decide."

Monsieur declared unhesitatingly for the forward policy. The days of his holiday in the South were drawing to a close. To return to England without a head of the rare quarry which had been its main objective would be disappointing indeed.

"To the Val d'A— by all means. *Marchons!*"

And march we did—for many a weary mile. The afternoon shadows were lengthening when at last we rounded the final craggy steep and the narrow defile of the Val d'A— lay stretched below us. A belt of scrub oak was between it and the bare hillside on which we stood. "And there, to my thinking," said Perrin, in an impressive undertone, "will the izard at this hour be feeding?"

Coupeau shrugged his shoulders and arched his grizzled eyebrows, but gave no audible expression to his scepticism; and, as speedily and noiselessly as might be, we descended to the timber belt and worked our way, against wind, towards the head of the valley.

"And here, too, the gentleman is not at home," I was saying to myself, as daylight began to show through the tree trunks on the outskirts of the wood, when, emerging from a small hollow, my eyes, as they gained the level of its brim, were caught by a rigid, foxy-red form outlined against a gaunt, grey juniper bush. In a flash my rifle was at my shoulder, and the izard's warning whistle was cut short by the thud of the bullet which passed clean through his heart. He gave a great leap in air, fell over on his side, kicked convulsively for a moment, then lay motionless.

"Truly a lucky chance," muttered Coupeau, with grudging approval.

"*Magnifique!* Never have I seen a finer head," cried Perrin, exultantly.

For myself, I owned to a little disappointment. The chamois was smaller than its Alpine brother; its weight, I judged, about sixty pounds. Its horns were shorter, nine inches at most. Still, I had attained my object; the head of that very rare bird, the izard of the Pyrenees, had been added to my collection. My spirits rose high. "Darkness coming on? Pooh!" I scoffed at Coupeau's suggestion of passing the night at the tiny hamlet clinging to the hillside at the top of the narrow glen. "Snow? What do a few flakes matter? Let's push on home as quickly as possible."

"Monsieur has reason," said Perrin. He completed the izard's obsequies, rose from his knees and wiped hands and hunting-knife on his greasy leather breeches. "By the pass I spoke of we shall shorten our route by half. And at the village we shall, without difficulty, find a guide."

"A miserable, mouse-hearted Spaniard!" growled Coupeau. For the hardy mountain Basque has for his Southern neighbour, as, indeed, for most other races outside his own peculiar people, an immeasurable contempt.

It was a squalid hamlet, its inhabitants a singularly ill-favoured lot. From their puny ranks we selected a beetle-browed ruffian, who was by universal acclaim declared the very prince and *ne plus ultra* of guide.

"The pass to C—?" he cried. "I know it as the fingers of my right hand!" and scornfully flipped the digits in question.

"A jolly good thing he does," I murmured to myself, as, an hour or two later, I ruefully scanned the snowy waste around us. Scanned as much of it as was visible, for, now that we were well up into the regions which wear their white mantle practically all the year round, the heavy grey clouds above our heads began to discharge their load. Thick and fast fell the snowflakes, darker and darker grew the sky. And darker and darker grew the brow of Coupeau.

"Imbecile! where goest thou?" he suddenly called out to our guide. "This spot we passed a good half-hour ago—see those pointed rocks!"

It was true. The fast-falling snow had already obliterated our tracks; but I, too, recognised the three sharp pinnacles of grey stone, on whose steep sides the flakes found no lodgment.

"But—but—" quavered the guide, and his voice trailed weakly into silence.

I glanced sharply at the man. He was trembling in every limb, his face was grey, his quivering lips pale as ashes.

"The fellow is going to collapse—and the flask is empty," I said to myself. Hardly had the thought flashed through my brain when the man swayed once, twice, then fell forward on his face and lay immovable.

Before I could reach his side, Coupeau pushed the inert form with his foot. "What did I say?" he grunted, contemptuously. "These chicken-hearted pigs of Spain! Every year they die on these passes like flies. The cold seizes on their empty stomachs, and, poof!—However, it matters the less, now that I begin to see where we are. Follow on, monsieur; I feel confident that I can lead home." Without another glance at the prostrate figure, he turned to resume his tramp through the snow.

"Good God!" I exclaimed, in horrified amaze. "What of this man? Would you leave him to perish!"

Coupeau threw a scowling glance over his shoulder. "A dog of a Spaniard more or less, what matters it?" he growled.

"He has reason, monsieur"—Perrin's murmur was in my ear. "To attempt to carry him endangers all our lives. And for him—what is it but a sleep and a nothingness? An easy passing along the road which, some day, we must all travel."

"Look here!" There was that in my tone which brought Coupeau to a dead stop. "Take this man between you—you, Perrin, his head. Later I will relieve you. Now, march!"

There was a momentary pause. The two brutes cast a furtive glance at my face, then their eyes fell to the reversed rifle with its workmanlike butt. Without another word they stooped and raised the unconscious man. In a silence that might be felt, we plodded on through the gathering night and the fast-falling snow. At last Coupeau let his burden fall and turned upon me.

"Mais, à quoi bon?" he cried, bitterly. "The imbecile is dead." He strode up to the man's head, which Perrin had

dropped, and, raising the chin with a jerk: "Art thou dead?" he queried, fiercely. "Speak! art thou dead? . . . But yes, it leaps to the eyes. Wherefore longer drag a useless carcase?" and he let the helpless head fall with a dull thud upon the snow.

"March! I will take your place for a time. Perrin, go to his feet." Disregarding the low curses growled into their beards, I drove the men on. Darkness descended in real earnest, the cold became intense—on and on we toiled. At last the snowflakes grew fewer, then ceased to fall; a pale moon struggled through the drifting clouds. Coupeau, who, unencumbered, was leading the way, threw up his arms with an exceeding loud and bitter cry.

"We are undone! All is over. We have missed the track and have arrived at the sheer cliff which closes in the head of the valley. Means of descent there are none. We perish of cold and famine. Here I lie down and become as that other dead one," and he cast himself upon the ground. With a groan of despair, Perrin sank down beside him.

Means of descent there were none! . . . I considered the situation. More than a thousand feet below twinkled the lights of our village. Warmth, food, salvation lay at the foot of that mighty sloping wall of virgin snow. . . . Means of descent? I grasped my stout stick. . . .

"Stop where you are—in this precise spot. Keep awake. If I live, I will bring help"—and forthwith I launched myself upon the glissade.

Heavens! that *was* a moment of "crowded life"! Even faster than my body whirled my thoughts. To a certain extent my trusty stick guided and retarded the mad rush—but it was a wofully bruised and battered individual who awoke from his bewildered trance to find himself on the wiry turf of the meadow at the head of the glen, and who dazedly contemplated the miraculous fact that he was still in the land of the living.

"Let me pour this cognac down his throat," the stout *gardien de chasse* who had led my rescue-party approached the unconscious guide. He forced liquor between the clenched teeth, while two other men vigorously chafed the stiffened limbs. "He stirs—he chokes—he coughs! Undoubtedly, he will speedily recover. More cognac. Here, Jacques, give a little light—approach the lantern."

As its rays fell on the white face, to which a faint colour was rising, and on the eyes, now open and blankly gazing at the rescuer, the *gardien* started to his feet with a howl of dismay. "What do I see? What worthless life have you, then, saved?" He turned upon me a look of ineffable reproach. "It is Raimondo, of all poachers the most abominable! He who has for years been the curse of the Government, the bane of my life! Monsieur, I would not speak to you too harshly—you knew not what you did—but why, why? Name of a dog! *why* did you not leave him among the snows?"

THE LATE LORD SWAYTHLING'S SILVER.—I.

BY the death of Lord Swaythling there passes from one generation to another the finest collection of old English silver-work that has been accumulated by any one man within living memory. Lord Swaythling began collecting nearly half a century ago, when examples could be bought for as many shillings as they now realise pounds. His aim from the first was comprehensive, in that he did not seek the oldest, rarest, or most costly objects, but aimed at securing examples which were the finest of their kind. While never acquiring anything devoid of interest, his scheme of collecting embraced not only the most ancient articles, but also those of comparatively recent manufacture, such as the teapot and coffee-pot, which were not known in England before the middle of the seventeenth century, and it extended to objects of the latter part of the eighteenth century. The collection as he left it, is therefore both catholic and chronological, and it would be difficult to find another, large or small, in which a sound aim in collecting is better exemplified.

It was for many years Lord Swaythling's custom to entertain at Saturday luncheons antiquaries, artists and collectors, many of whom knew his collection nearly as well as he did himself. Without having individual pieces brought to our notice, those of us who enjoyed his hospitality were welcome to examine and criticise every object which he possessed. It therefore gives me particular pleasure to describe in this and a succeeding article a few of his more notable examples of English silver, which with many others from the same collection will be dealt with more fully in my "History of English Plate," now going through the press.

One of the earliest examples of plate possessed by Lord Swaythling is a late fifteenth century chalice of Irish manufacture. It has a slight resemblance to some English chalices of the fifteenth century, but differs in detail from every known English type. The bowl is deep and conical, the stem is octagonal, with panels of Gothic tracery, and has an eight-lobed wythen knot with eight lozenge-shaped knops. The foot is also octagonal, with eight points at its base and eight concave chamfered sides. Engraved in Gothic lettering on the foot, in addition to the sacred monogram IHC, is an inscription which probably was intended to record that the chalice was made to the order of Thomas and Granina Burke [of] Invernalle in the year 1494.

Perhaps the most interesting series of examples of wrought silver in this collection are the standing salts and small receptacles for salt called Trencher salts. The "Salsar," "selere," "salere," "Salte-seller," or, as it was for brevity most frequently called, "the Salt," was the most important article of domestic plate in the Middle ages. The "great salt," or large receptacle which held the sacred commodity for consumption at the high table where the lord or master sat, was an object of considerable importance; it was almost invariably of silver, either plain or gilt, very rarely of gold, and always occupied the central and most significant position on the table. Similarly, but in a less degree, the silver salt-cellars of smaller size, which were placed on other parts of the dining-table, were regarded as articles of consequence. A great deal of twaddle has been written to the effect that the salt "served to divide the lord and his nobler guests from the inferior guests and menials"; that it was "placed upon the table as a barrier

between the guest and the menial," and so forth, under the assumption that there was an actual line of demarcation indicated by the salt, for the separation of the guests dining at the same table into two classes. This erroneous idea with reference to the salt appears to have arisen by the drawing of unwarranted deductions from certain passages in the writings

of early sixteenth century satirists; such as:

... a coxcomb who never drinks below the salt.

Plague him; set him beneath the salt and let him not touch a bit till every one has had his full cut.

There is no reference to the salt as a barrier between guests of different degree; nor if we turn to earlier writers is any indication to be found that the salt "served to divide the nobles from the inferior guests."

In John Russell's "Book of Nurture" the butler is directed to "Set your salt on the right side where sits your soverayne." It seems clear that, when the lord and his guests and retainers dined in the great hall, the custom with reference to the position of the salt was much

whose mark, as well as the hall-mark of Exeter, where the object was assayed about 1582, is stamped on it. Its cylindrical body, eight and a-quarter inches high, is embossed with large and small cartouches connected by strapwork bands; the larger cartouches enclose lions' masks, and the smaller ones circular bosses; the interspaces are embossed with garlands of fruit and flowers. The convex base is somewhat similarly embossed, and rests on three feet formed as demi-horses. Within the projecting cornice, which is ornamented like the base, is the salt bowl, encircled by the ovolo-enriched band of the domical cover, which is embossed with cartouches and garlands of fruit, and has a vase-shaped finial surmounted by the standing figure of a man holding a spear and a shield. The second is a plain, drum-shaped salt with steeple cover, a form which appears to have been made in England from the latter part of the sixteenth century down to the reign of Charles I. It has a cylindrical body and a simple moulded base, resting on three claw-and-ball feet. A moulded cornice surrounds the salt-bowl, and attached to its rim are four scroll brackets supporting the plain domical cover, which is surmounted by a tall pyramidal spire terminating in a round baluster-shaped finial. The spire is supported at the angles by terminal figure brackets, which rest on the dome, and the lower parts of the faces of the spire are cut into the form of trefoil arches springing from the shoulders of the figures. This salt is ten and a-quarter inches high, and bears the London hall-marks for 1626-27 and maker's mark, a tree in a shaped shield.



LONDON SALT, 1626.

EXETER "SALT," 1582.

the same as it has been at City banquets and dinners in college halls until quite recently. The plate were placed in the middle of the high table, where the host was seated, with his guests on his right and left in order of precedence. Of course, when the seats at the high table were filled the other guests had to sit at the tables below, and among these (even in modern times) there may have been found a coxcomb who, being dissatisfied with his position, would, in the words of Ben Jonson, "never drink below the salt." The principal standing salt having been placed before the lord, and smaller salts set on other parts of the table, each person helped himself from the nearest of these receptacles with a knife to as much of the contents as he required, and placed it on the side of his trencher; into the salt so placed each slice of meat was dipped with the fingers and thence conveyed to the mouth. In the seventeenth century the custom for great personages to dine in the common hall, as Henry VII. did at Eltham, was discontinued.

Standing salts were made of various sizes and of many different forms, and were generally provided with covers, which were often fashioned as pepper-casters. The best known of the mediæval standing salts are of hour-glass shape; at a later date they were made with cylindrical bodies, outstanding bases and high tops. Two of Lord Swaythling's are here illustrated. The first is the work of a West Country goldsmith named Eston or Easton,



BELL SALT.

An example of another form of salt—a bell salt—is also represented. The claws on the ball feet in this case are not in relief, but merely indicated by lines chased on the balls. The two principal divisions have receptacles for salt, or salt and spice respectively, and are ornamented, not as these salts usually are, with an all-over pattern of flat chasing, but with bands of engraved work, such as is commonly found on Elizabethan Communion cups; the lower band has foliated scrollwork, the middle band having three continuous rows of overlapping laurel leaves, and the upper band three lines of incised hyphens or hit-and-miss work. The domed top is enriched with an engraved band of laurel leaves, and surmounted by a short, hollow cylindrical section and a pierced sphere for casting pepper, terminating with a short ribbed and pointed finial. The height is nine and a-quarter inches. The hall-marks, which are visible in the illustration, are those of London for 1599-1600. There are in the collection a number of other salts of more

recent date, but their patterns are so much more generally known that they are not illustrated.

Before the end of the sixteenth century, when the latest of the standing salts just referred to was made, no forks were used in England. The meat was held by the finger and thumb of one hand and cut with a knife held in the other, and was conveyed to the mouth with the fingers. This caused the fingers to be much soiled and greased, and it became necessary to wash the hands either several times after each course, or, if once only, at the conclusion of the dinner. For that purpose a large round dish with a deep depression was taken round the table by one attendant, and a ewer containing rose-water by another, who also carried a towel. Those who had dined held their hands over the rose-water dish while the attendant poured water over them.

Among the examples of embossed plate of the Restoration period is an immense oval dish. It illustrates the unsuitability of thin silver, ornamented with embossed work, to some of the purposes for which it appears to have been designed and used. It has a broad, flat rim chased with acanthus scrolls surrounding a single large depression, in the middle of which is an oval panel bordered with a raised cable-moulding. The panel is embossed with a tent, from the dexter side of which a banner charged with a lion rampant is hung out over a small tree; on the other side stands a man armed with a sword and spear. Beneath the tent, within an acanthus scroll border, is engraved: THE ARMS OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH GIVEN THEM BY THE LORD. The space between the central panel and the rim is embossed and chased with roses, sunflowers, tulips and thistles, designed and wrought in a stiff conventional manner; and engraved on the back is: *This Silver belonged to Archibald, eighth Earl and first Marquis of Argyll, beheaded May 25th, 1661.* The four broad handles are cast and chased in a foliated pattern, so arranged that the central part of each presents the appearance of a grotesque mask in the style of some of the repoussé work of the third quarter of the seventeenth century. The work altogether is inferior to most of the embossed work of the Charles II. period; and the unsuitability of repoussé silver for such a vessel, unless made of much greater thickness than this article, is proved by the fractures which are apparent on the inner edge of the rim, close to the handles at each end.



SILVER OF SILVER REPOUSSÉ.



CUP AND COVER (XV. CENTURY).



SERPENTINE MAZER BOWL.

twenty-seven inches long by twenty-two and three-quarter inches wide. The embossing of the rim and the first depression is probably

Scotch work of about 1660. The handles were added by John Ruslen, a London goldsmith of the time of William III., whose mark they bear, together with the London hall-marks of 1701-2; the embossing of the panel in the middle of the dish and the inscription below the tent were probably executed at the same time.

Among the earliest drinking-vessels either of silver or of other material mounted with silver was the mazer. The name is derived from the material of which the vessel was formed. It comes from an old German word "Masa," meaning a spot, and the term mazer was applied to the drinking-bowl because it was made of spotted

wood. The bowls were usually turned in a lathe and mounted with a deep rim of silver round the upper part and an ornamental medallion called a "print" of silver which was fixed in the base.

In the Swaythling Collection is a fine example of an early sixteenth century mazer, but the object now illustrated is more properly described as a bowl of mazer form. It is of polished serpentine, with a deep lip-band and foot of silver-gilt. The foot differs from those of ordinary mazers. Its base-moulding is encircled with a ring of beads, and above the moulding a mound embossed with swirling lobes. Attached to the foot is a serrated band of silver-gilt bent over a small projecting member at the base of the serpentine bowl, which is thus firmly held. The silver-work bears no hall-marks, but its date is obviously about the first quarter of the sixteenth century.

Not less interesting is the silver-gilt cup of mazer form which formerly belonged to the Rodney family, whose arms, three eagles displayed, are engraved on the knop of the cover. The outline of bowl and foot has a marked resemblance to the mazer of c. 1440 at All Souls' College, Oxford. The bowl is a flattened and lobed sphere, with a narrow moulded and beaded vertical lip-band; it rests on a concave foot, which extends outward over a sexfoil base, with a high vertical moulding and a flat base-plate. The cover is a reduced replica of the bowl, which it fits over in a manner similar to that of the mediæval trussing cup and German double cup of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, terminating with a knop surmounted

by a medallion with moulded edge and engraved with the arms mentioned already. The peculiar feature of this cup is the bracket-shaped handle attached to the bowl, which is doubtless of German origin, as handles of this kind are very rarely found

on English vessels, but are by no means uncommon on German cups.

Other objects from this notable collection will be illustrated and described in a further article.

C. J. JACKSON.

THE MILL AND THE OVEN.

OF considerable importance it is to understand the true bearing of the agitation that has been going on for a few weeks now in favour of an improvement of our daily bread. The first point to be kept in view is that the popular cry which has found expression in the columns of the *Daily Mail* (and our contemporary is to be congratulated on having taken it up) is but the sequel to an immense scientific activity of an effective but less noisy description. An idea of it may be obtained by turning back to the discussion on wheat which took place at the meeting of the British Association at Winnipeg in 1909, and reported in a special supplement to the *Journal of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries*. It showed, as our own columns have done from time to time, that investigation was being conducted in a variety of channels. Both in Canada and in this country an extraordinary amount of attention has been directed to the development of a type of wheat suitable to the climate where it is grown. One result, as was described by our contributor "R. H. B.," is that the wheats in favour with the farmers of this country a generation ago have become practically obsolete. Chiddam, Talavera, Lammas, Golden Drop and so on only survive here and there, and in many parts of the country one can travel for the whole of a long summer day without recognising any other sort than the ubiquitous Square Head's Master. Many farmers are of the same opinion as Mr. John Keeble of Brantham Hall, near Manningtree, who farms a thousand acres, nearly all arable. "We grow nothing but Square Head's Master, with probably a little French in the spring," and he "can confidently say there is no other wheat worth growing about here." Yet Square Head's Master is not the ideal wheat, as we hope to show later. However, that is anticipating; all we want to do now is to show the vast change that has taken place since the day when farmers knew no better breed than Talavera. Canada has been fortunate in the possession of hard wheats that provided the best grain for the miller. Yet Mr. Saunders, the cereal-ist of the Dominion Experimental Farms, is sanguine that a breed will be developed to supersede the famous Red Fife, even if that has not already been accomplished in Marquis. No doubt other types will be evolved in process of time.

Already it has been shown that the growing of hard wheats in this climate is by no means impossible. Varieties of Red Fife have been, and are being, successfully cultivated in various districts of the country; but the result is not, as a rule, satisfactory to the farmers. The purchaser, it is true, prefers the hard wheat;

but, unfortunately, it has proved, so far, only a moderate cropper, and not to be compared in this respect to Square Head's Master. There is a difference in price, but it is not sufficient to make up for the deficiency in crop. Mr. Edward Eames of Compton, Winchester, puts this in a nutshell when he says, "growers are disappointed with the prices. Millers offer only from two to four shillings per quarter more than for the ordinary wheats."

This statement applies not only to England, but to Australia, where the hard wheats can be easily grown, but do not yield so well as to tempt the farmers. Some time ago the point was raised in one of our Chambers of Agriculture, and an Australian representative who was present put the case very clearly when he said that, if there could be guaranteed to Australian growers a price sufficient to make up for the deficiency of crop, he, on his part, would undertake to send a full supply to the British market. But this was not practicable.



O. Hardee.

THE HARVEST THAT IS TO BE.

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W. Selfe.

THE MILL AND THE CROSS.

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The problem of science, then, is to breed a variety of hard wheat that will yield as bountifully, or nearly as bountifully, as the soft wheats. The opinion was expressed at the famous Winnipeg meeting, by a man actually engaged in the work of hybridisation, that the task was not an impossible one. Were it solved, a long step would be taken towards the re-establishment of agricultural prosperity in this country. It is obvious that the farmer, who, during the last thirty years, has had a hard fight to make both ends meet, is bound to grow a crop that will yield the best financial result. Out of the immense correspondence which we have had on the subject, we may select two or three passages which will speak as well as a hundred could do as to the farmer's difficulties. Messrs. Garton of Warrington, for example, tell us that they have made tests with Canadian wheats in various districts, and they give results which vary from three and a-half quarters per statute acre in Cambridgeshire to two and a-half quarters in Bedford. The experiments were conducted, it may be said, in Kent, Devon, Bedford, Yorkshire and Cambridge. The experience of many of those who have cultivated Manitoba wheat bears this out to the letter. For example, Mr. Walter Crosland writes from Buscott Park that he grew some Manitoba wheat last year and planted it along the side of a piece of French wheat, and the French wheat did very much better, yielding twenty-seven bushels per acre. He has not yet threshed the corn, but says the Manitoba wheat showed very small heads, and did not seem to have very much vigour and produced a thin sample; while the French wheat grew right up to the time of harvest and produced a much fuller, plumper berry. Others write to us to give the difference between the prices of Manitoba Hard and Square Head's Master. We ought to add, however, that several correspondents tell us that Manitoba wheat has yielded very well with them.

Our correspondent Mr. A. T. Matthews tells us that his nephew grew Manitoba wheat in 1905 and got four quarters per acre on land that was not first-rate wheat land. He sold it at thirty-three shillings per quarter on the same day that he sold Square Head's Master at twenty-eight shillings. The following year he got four and a-half quarters per acre, and sold it for thirty-eight shillings against thirty-three shillings per quarter for Square Head's Master. We are bound to say, however, that this experience is exceptional. The preponderating majority

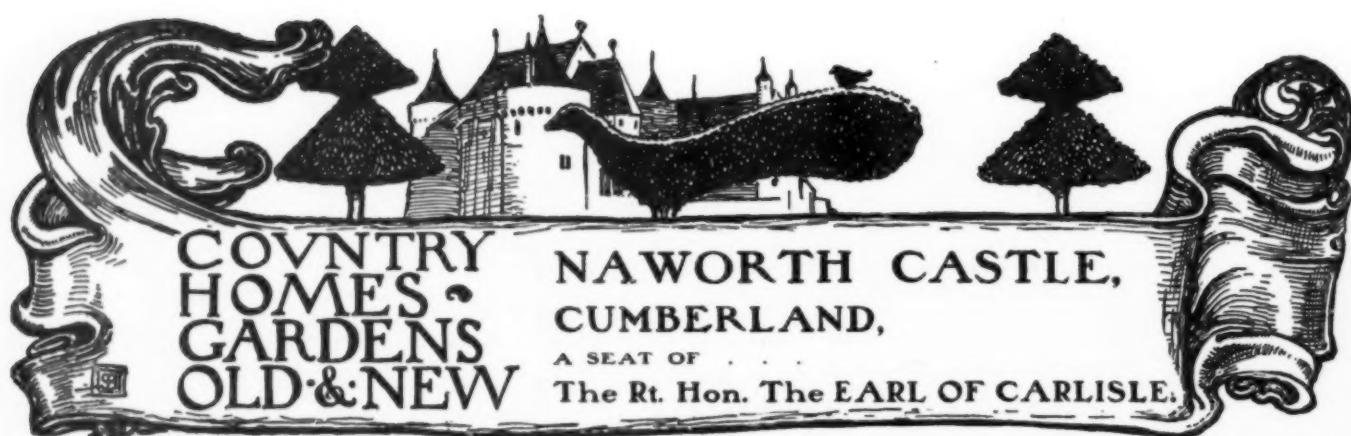
of those who have written to us complain that it does not pay them to grow Manitoba wheat, because the returns are so much inferior. The farmer, therefore, must wait upon the man of science, hoping that the latter will be able by skilful crossing and selection to evolve a breed of hard wheat that will be as productive as the softer kinds. A worthy scope for research and experiment still, therefore, lies open to the investigator. But this does not finish the problems connected with the production of wheat. The statistician has one of his own, and this is the comparative rate at which consumption and production grow. In 1898, Sir William Crookes alarmed the whole world by his statement that the supply of wheat was not keeping up to the demand, and that within a measurable time either there would be a scarcity or science would have come to the rescue in the form of increasing the productiveness. Low prices and competition have stimulated the farmer to such exertions that he is now able to produce on an average very much more than would have contented him ten or fifteen years ago. Mr. Primrose McConnell—and there could scarcely be a better judge—has stated in our columns that a thirty-two bushel standard has been substituted for a thirty bushel, and some improvement may be expected in this direction. But this does not meet the needs of the situation.

Since 1897, and after the stagnation produced by an era of cheap food, there has been not only a widening of the wheat area, but also a vast increase of consumers. A well-informed writer says: "As a human food it is displacing rice, millet and other grains in the East, and rice on the Continent of Europe." That is not the most striking way to state the fact that millions of new consumers are being added by the nations of the East. Also there is an increased standard of living in Germany and industrial Europe, which vastly adds to the world's consumption. In our own very advanced country it may be noted that many articles of diet common when wheat was dear have been abolished since it became cheap. The most striking example is found in Scotland, where the wholesome, old-fashioned dishes made of oatmeal are falling into desuetude. The Scottish peasant of a century ago—nay, of fifty years ago—almost lived on oatmeal. He began his day on a breakfast of porridge and milk, if he could get it, but if he could not the alternative was "crowdy." Readers of Burns will remember his reference to

"crowdy time." Dinner often consisted of oat-cakes and "the weel-hained bannock" of cheese. Porridge again was his meal when he returned at night. Who does not remember the famous tail-piece of Bewick showing the weary hind lifting his hands "to ask a blessing" before supper. His eyes are closed, and he sees not the cat emptying the dish! For this food is largely substituted white bread and tea. And such white bread and such tea! Those who are in the habit of reading the reports of the various Medical Officers of Health in the North of England and in Scotland need not be told how these advisers of the public have pointed out with unwearied iteration the evil effects of this diet. In many houses tea is brewed at six o'clock in the morning, and the teapot is never cleaned out or taken from the hob all day. A little more tea may be added at times, but it soaks and simmers till the whole of the tannin is extracted; and, curiously enough, this bitter

beverage is liked by those who drink it. Yet this stewed tea, or extract of tannin, is drunk six times a day in thousands of households. As to the bread, it is rendered white by many dubious devices. In a middle-class household it is not uncommon to find that brown bread is preferred to any other; but the poorer the people are, the more they seem to desire an absolutely white loaf, divested of bran and too often adulterated. We can scarcely conceive of a diet that is worse for the constitution. It is no wonder that disastrous effects have been traced in the physique of the people. Many of them are as white-faced and feeble as the children of East End slums, notwithstanding the fresh air in which they live for the greater part of their lives. These are the facts that render it a matter of very great importance that a change should be made in the manner of living of the peasants who form the backbone of the nation.





TO the stranger who first sees Naworth from the steep descent from the Newcastle Road, the castle seems to lie in a hollow in the woods. And it is possible to enter without feeling sure whether, like many ancient fortresses, it stands by the water-side. Once within, the question is easily settled. Upon the other sides the dwelling-rooms look down on the warm-coloured banks of two steep glens, which converge and meet below the castle to the west. Each forms a water-course, the northern for the castle beck, the southern for a smaller tributary stream; and the sound of their falls enters by every open window. Naworth has, in fact, the ideal situation suggested by Viollet-le-Duc in his history of an imaginary fortress. It stands on a promontory steeply sloping on three sides, and approached on the fourth by an easily defensible neck of land. At the present day the advantage of such a natural defence, were it needed, would be neutralised by the thickly growing trees, which fill the glen and offer cover to the enemy. But these are the growth of peaceful years. In the sixteenth century, when Lord Hunsdon received orders to assault the rebel Leonard Dacre in his castle at Naworth, he objected that the place was held in great force; there were "ordenance and gones

levied at every corner," and the whole land was kept bare, so that it could not be approached. The entrance, which, he adds, is "very straightly kept," was guarded then, as now, by a low, substantial gatehouse, which Elizabeth suggested that he might blow in with a petard; across the only way of approach by land was drawn a moat, represented by the terrace walk shown in one of the illustrations. A second tower, similar to the gatehouse, rises out of the moat, with which its name "The Boat House," may be connected, though some antiquaries have derived it from the bote or fuel stored there. These towers formed part of an outer courtyard, which has disappeared.

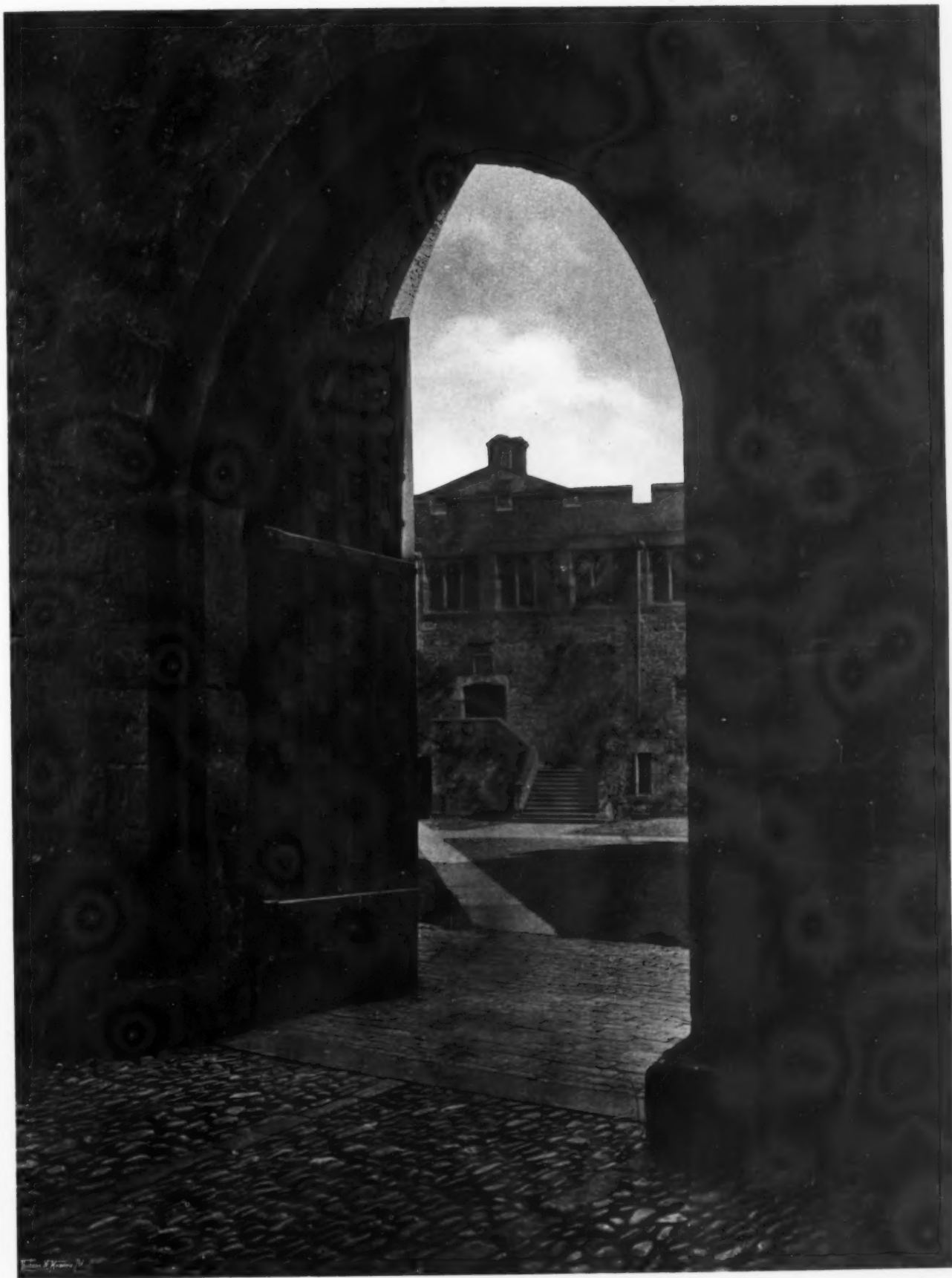
Within the gatehouse is the long battlemented face of the main building, flanked by a tower at either end. That on the left is the Dacre, or Old Tower, built, at the latest, in the tenth century, and certainly the oldest part of the building. Its design shows it to have been one of the peel-towers which were built everywhere in Cumberland at that date. Below it had a vaulted room for cattle, afterwards used as a dungeon, and dwelling-rooms above. A licence to crenellate was given in the reign of Edward III., and round this a bailey with outer buildings was constructed. But in the shape in which it now



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LORD WILLIAM'S TOWER FROM COURTYARD.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE COURTYARD

"COUNTRY LIFE."

stands Naworth dates from the Tudor period. Its first great architect was the Thomas Dacre whose initials are still on the Dacre Tower and the Boat House. He was descended, in the fifth generation, from Ranulph de Dacre, who eloped with the heiress of the family of de Multon, and thus acquired, with many other estates, the barony of Gilsland, which the de Multons, in their turn, had inherited by marriage in the twelfth century from the last male descendant of the line of de Vaux, on whom it had been conferred by Henry II. The heiress of the de Multons was already betrothed, when Ranulph carried her off from Warwick Castle, to Robert de Clifford. After two centuries a Dacre again disappointed a Clifford of an intended wife. Thomas, the rebuilder of Naworth, eloped from the Cliffords' Castle of Brougham with Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of the last male of the Greystock line. It may have been for this, or for a similar transaction, in which his mother, Mabel Dacre, was concerned, that his name appears in a list of those exempted from a general pardon in the year of Henry VIII.'s accession. But

his disgrace cannot have lasted much longer, for within a few months he was appointed "warden general of the marches of England towards Scotland," and continued at intervals to hold that office for the west marches, or the entire border, until his death in 1525.

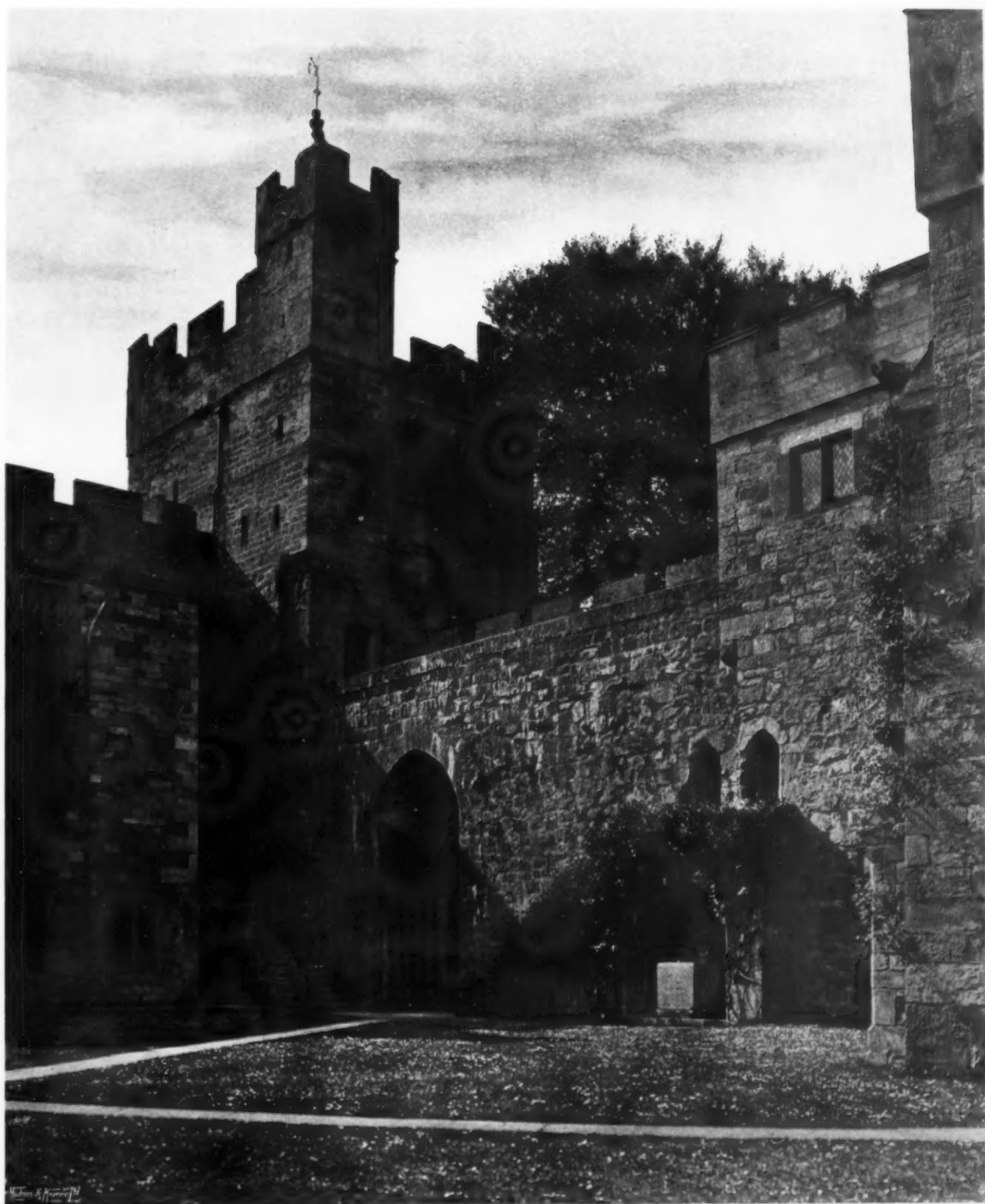
He was a great architect. Askerton and Drumburgh Castles are his work, and the details remain of an elaborate reconstruction of Wark on Tweed, which he undertook for the King. He had also a castle at Morpeth, of which a visitor wrote, when Queen Margaret of Scotland had fled over the Border and taken refuge there, that he never saw a baron's house "better trimmed" in his life. But Thomas was much more than a castle-builder. As warden of the marches he has left, in despatches and correspondence, the picture of his own character and of Border life in the last century of the wardens. The history of the wardens begins in the fourteenth century. Upon Edward I.'s intervention in Scotch politics followed a long period during which the quarrels of their masters taught the



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THE MOAT, GATEHOUSE AND DACRE TOWER.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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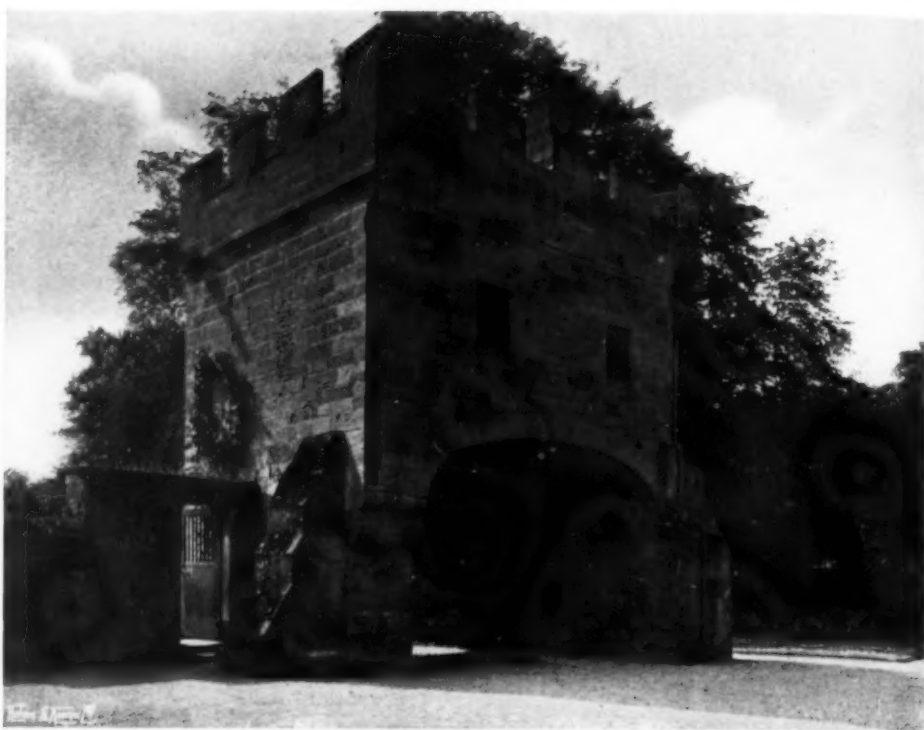
DACRE TOWER FROM COURTYARD.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

people on either side of the Border to look upon each other as traditional, necessary foes. On the moors and in the lonely valleys civilisation lagged behind, and it was in the middle march, where the boundary follows the line of the Cheviots, that cattle-raiding most prevailed and lingered. Here justice was slowest to reach the criminal and a peaceful living was hardest to earn. The west march, in which Naworth lay, was more tranquil; the wardens were greatly indebted to the Solway Firth, a more efficient barrier than any range of hills. But at the head of Solway was a lawless district called "the debatable land." In Thomas Dacre's time the custom was that cattle might be pastured there, and eat "with bitte of mouth, fro the sunrise to it set again," but that after sunset they were lawful prize. England and Scotland disputed its obedience, and it was proposed to settle the question drastically by removing the population wholesale and leaving it uninhabited. In the reign of Edward VI. another way was found, and the land was divided between an English and a Scotch parish. But this theory of lawyers did not alter the ways of the inhabitants.

The cattle-driving which prevailed along the Border was once a common crime all over England. The blood feuds for which the Border was famous were, equally, the survival of a custom once universal. The distinguishing feature of the life of the marches was that such feuds continued to be common for centuries after they had begun to decline elsewhere before the advance of a national and legal method of justice. These three circumstances—the traditional hostility of the two nations, cattle-raiding and blood feuds—were the broadest features of Border history, and in their setting of desolate hill country help to explain Border poetry. Its romance is the successful raid, or "road," as it is often called, its tragedy is the widowed bride or the rider or lover trapped by the enemies of his house. The stories which we know are only types that must, from generation to generation, have been often repeated. A few years before the union of the two crowns occurred a repetition of the famous hunting over Cheviot, leading to a second encounter, in which the fortune of Chevy Chase was reversed and the Scots were defeated.

The wardenship was a form of administration designed to suit the peculiarity of the district. The land round the Border was divided on either side into three marches, the east, the middle and the west, though their control was sometimes concentrated in the hands of a single warden. As was natural, the warden was most often chosen from one of the great feudal houses. In Scotland the office was long held by the family of Douglas, and after their fall by the Maxwells, the Kerrs, the Scotts and the Homes; on the English side by the Percies, and sometimes by the Nevilles and Dacres. The warden was an officer of justice in a district where crime was continually involving a neighbouring people, with whom they were on such terms that injuries could only be redressed by a special agreement. This took the form of a joint assize, called the march meeting, or Trewes, held from time to time at some meeting-place near the Border. The victim of a robbery could, indeed, by the custom of "Hot Trod," pursue the robber over the Border, recover his property and return without suffering any hindrance from the people of the country. But this method was not always



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THE GATEHOUSE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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GATEHOUSE AND DACRE TOWER.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

—perhaps not frequently—successful; it involved the danger of provoking a general outbreak, and it did little to deter the thief. Hence the institution of the Trewes. Before the day of meeting, each warden would collect the bills of complaint framed by anyone who had suffered an injury, and he was responsible for producing at the meeting all those within his own boundary against whom any charge was made. On each side a pledge of truce had to be given—a necessary preliminary, since some of those who attended might be at feud—and the assize, consisting of six English and six Scots, then began. They considered each bill and pronounced it either clear or foul. If it was "fouled," or "fyled," the penalty was decided according to a fixed rate of fines. The warden had to execute the sentence; but it is likely that very few of them were carried into effect. Very often the warden would be unable or unwilling to arrest the accused. On one occasion Thomas Dacre saw one of the "slayers," whom the Scotch wardens had professed that they could not find, actually present at the meeting; whereupon he accused him openly, but it does not appear that he was brought to justice.

Thomas Dacre was not merely a Border chief or a local officer. As warden he represented the English Crown in negotiations with Scotland. After the battle of Flodden, in which Dacre commanded the reserve which rescued Lord Edmund

Howard at a critical moment, the object of the English Government was to prevent their neighbours from recovering their strength. Dacre was their agent in this design. At one time he writes of the west march "where, as there was in all times past, four hundred ploughs and above, which are now clearly

past four months no more than eighty houses had been destroyed on the English side of the Border.

In the second generation after Thomas Dacre a family of four children was left to the wardship of the Duke of Norfolk, who married their widowed mother. The only male



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DACRE TOWER FROM CAPON GILL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

wasted, and no man dwelling in any of them." At another time the Scotch believed that his brother Sir Christopher had been outlawed, so that he might be able to raid without the English warden incurring any responsibility. The English Border did not escape much more easily. In a letter already quoted Dacre goes on to set to his own credit the fact that in the

child died soon after, and the Duke of Norfolk then married his sons to the joint heiresses of the Dacre estates. Naworth, with other lands in the North, passed with his wife Elizabeth to Lord William Howard, but the property was disputed by two brothers of the last Dacre possessor. One of these, Leonard Dacre, played a double part in the rising of the



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SOUTH FRONT FROM THE GARDEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

(Lord William Howard's Tower, Boat-house and Old Moat in front.)

Northern lords in 1569. In the following year Lord Hunsdon was directed to storm the rebel, whose pretence of aiding the Queen's party had now been exposed, in his stronghold at Naworth. Hunsdon made the attempt, but, finding "every hylle full of men, bothe horsemen and footmen, krynge and showtyng, as they had beyn mad," retreated. Leonard Dacre pursued, overtook him at Hell Beck, and was utterly defeated. The Borderers "gave the proudest charge that ever I saw," but they could not resist the steady fire of the Berwick musketeers.

Hunsdon describes how Dacre himself "was the first man that flew, like a tall gentleman." He escaped abroad and died in exile. Meanwhile Howards, Dacres, Lowthers and the Crown disputed for the estate, and Naworth was unoccupied and fell partly into ruins. Lord William at last was allowed to buy a recognition of his title and began to reside early in the seventeenth century. He made few additions, but repaired the structure and made alterations in the interior; in particular he formed the gallery on the upper storey of the east front.

Though a part of the traditions about him may have been transferred to his generation from the times of the Dacres, there remain the authentic traces of a remarkable character. He was a Catholic, and an informer wrote "he is thought to keape priest in his howse, which upon examination may more plainlie be knowne." He was a scholar, editing the chronicle of Florence of Worcester, and forming a library praised by his friend Camden. In the reign of James I. the wardens of the marches were replaced by a commission. Lord William Howard's name appears at its head in 1618, but in other ways he had already made himself the name of a reformer of the administration of the "middle shires," as the marches were now called. The "Household books" which have been preserved and published show William and Elizabeth Howard constantly residing on their estate at Naworth with a family of married sons about them.

With the union of the two Crowns the situation on the Borders was changed. James made an attempt to stop the system of private war between the opposite marches. The

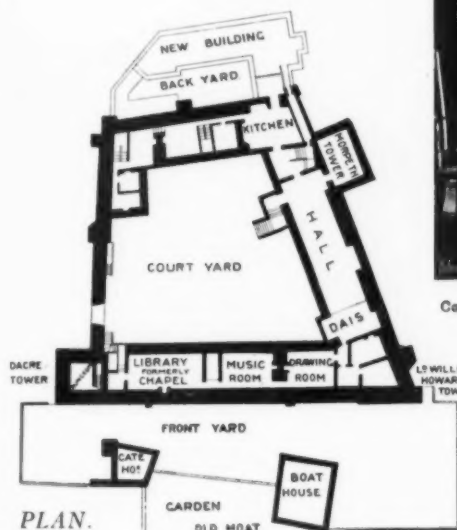


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THE HALL STEPS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

"raiders" in many cases took to plundering impartially on either side of the Border. They were known as "moss-troopers," and Fuller in his "Worthies" of Cumberland says that at the height of their power "they had two great enemies, the laws of the land, and Lord William Howard of Naworth." Their decay was due to "the wisdom, valour, and diligence of the right honourable Charles Lord Carlisle, earl of Carlisle, who routed these English Tories with his regiment." The grandson of this, the first Lord Carlisle, employed Vanbrugh to design another house in Yorkshire, and his



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"COUNTRY LIFE."

descendants during the eighteenth century preferred to live at Castle Howard. To this Naworth

perhaps owes its escape from a disfiguring restoration, though Frederick Lord Carlisle, the friend of Charles Fox, with a reverence for genuine antiquity rare in his age, wrote verses in its honour:

thy towers
Unmodernised by tasteless Art, remain
Still unsubdued by time.

In 1844 Naworth was partly gutted by fire. Above the turfed and flagged paths of the courtyard, the walls show the modern



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THE HALL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

stone with which it was repaired, mixed with the original. The work was carried out by Salvin, the castle architect of the mid-Victorian period, and the style of the original has been preserved. The hall, which is approached from the courtyard by a broad flight of steps, is in its old proportions, though the painted ceiling, from which the kings of England used to look down, has been replaced by a wooden roof. The four heraldic beasts, which adorned the minstrels' gallery, have survived. They are of the Tudor period, and two of them belong to the house of Greystock which was absorbed in the Dacres by the marriage of Thomas Dacre with the heiress. The chapel, which before the fire stood on the east side, is now the library. The internal decoration of this and other rooms is the work of the late C. J. Ferguson, who also designed the new wing on the west. Above the chapel runs the gallery connecting the two corner towers. The Howard Tower contains Lord William Howard's panelled bedroom, his oratory and the library in which a



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LANERCOST BRIDGE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

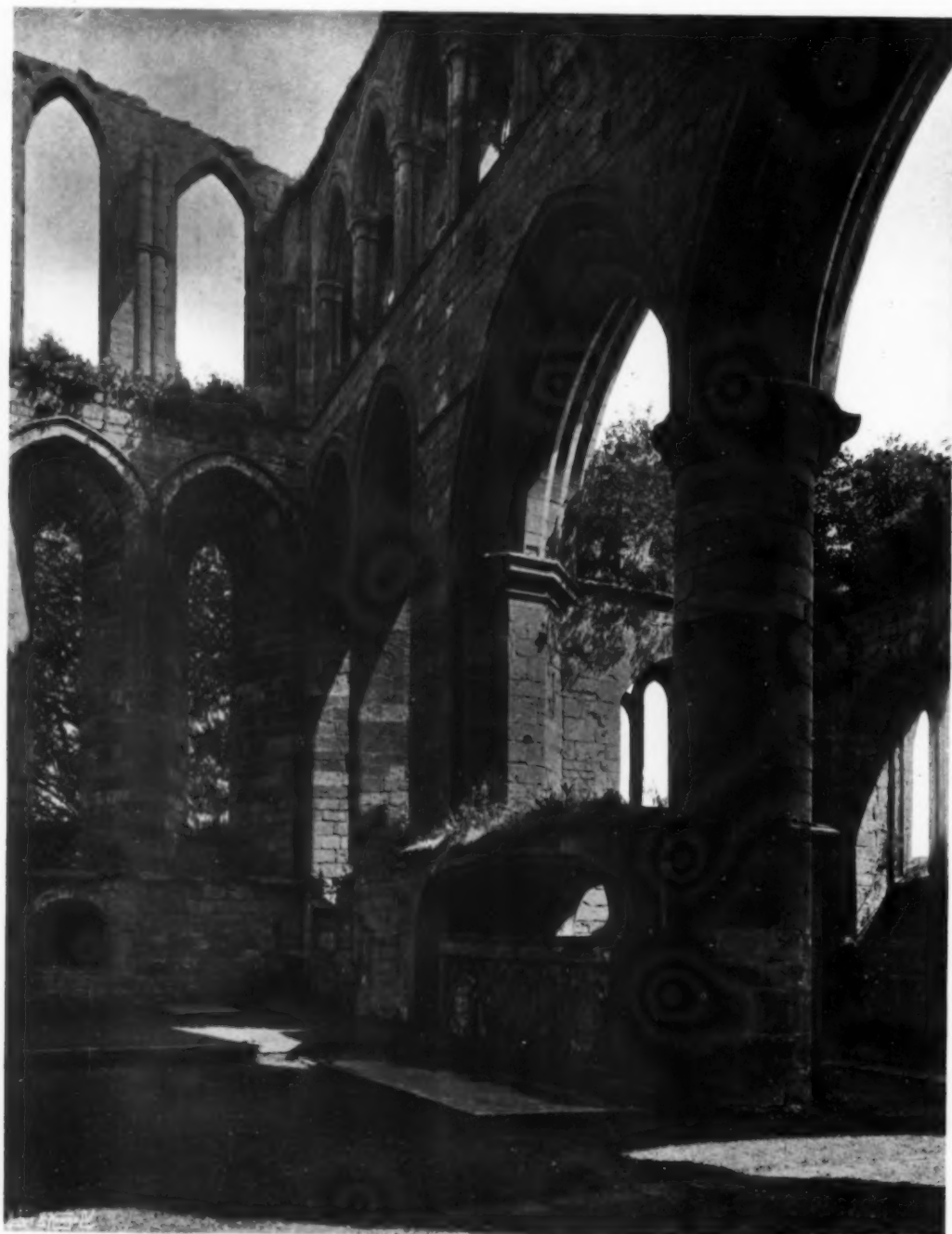
remnant of his collection is still preserved. The interior of the Dacre or Old Tower suffered in the fire; the dungeons remain, but the secret passage which ran beneath the gallery and led to them from Lord William's apartments disappeared in the alterations. Walter Scott saw the passage when he visited Naworth and transferred the scene to Inverary Castle in "A Legend of Montrose."

It was down such black stairs as still lead to the dungeons that Dugald Dalgetty stumbled over the body of the child of the Mist, and by such a passage that the Marquis of Argyll visited his prisoners in disguise and unwillingly provided Dalgetty with the means of escape.

In the valley of the Irthing, towards which the beck is flowing when it reaches Naworth, lies Lanercost Priory. The road crosses the Irthing by Lanercost Bridge, which is probably a work of very early date. The Priory was founded as a dependency of Hexham in the twelfth century, and is chiefly in the style of the following period. It was demolished with the lesser monasteries in the reign of Henry VIII. The nave only is used as a parish church, but the rest of the building, though roofless, is otherwise intact. The north chapel and the choir contain the tombs of several early masters of Naworth: of Roland de Vaux, and of the famous Thomas Dacre and his father, Humphrey Dacre, both in their day wardens of the marches.

It is thus bound by a strong connecting link to Naworth, and forms one of the many surrounding places which, taken together, tell us what can be known about the ancient Borderland, where the priest was always ready to shrive the moss-trooper.

P. A. B.



Copyright.

RUINS OF LANERCOST PRIORY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

LITERATURE.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

MR. BARING-GOULD has written many interesting books, but we do not know if he has ever hit upon a theme more fascinating than that of his latest production, *Cliff Castles and Cave Dwellings of Europe* (Seeley). Of course, all of us have read, with more or less wonder, of our primitive ancestors who lived as the wild beasts lived in lake fastnesses or caverns in the earth. But on this occasion Mr. Baring-Gould very properly slips past the pre-historic with just such a mention as helps to link the present to the past. At Conduché, where the Célé slides into the Lot, there is a cave in the great limestone precipice, which, to those who can read it, is an epitome of human history; and the stalactite cavern of Han, a show-place now, is of the same character. At the bottom of it we find remains of the very earliest inhabitants, with their hearths about which they sat naked and split bones to extract the marrow and trimmed flints and fashioned necklaces out of wolves' and bears' teeth. Above these remains lay pots, sherds, formed by hand long before the invention of the wheel. Higher up arms and utensils of the Bronze Age, and the weights of nets. Above these were remains of the Iron Age, and higher still a weight of a scale stamped with an effigy of the crusading king, St. Louis (1226-70). But it is strange that, in spite of all the advance that has been made, old civilisation, or rather un-civilisation, still remains among us. There are a few cave-dwellers in Great Britain to-day, especially in the North of Scotland. But in France there is a very considerable number. The nearest point at which one can see them is probably Dieppe, where fine healthy families inhabit the cliff caverns. They are robust in appearance and extremely intelligent; but it is difficult to descend to the mouths of their caves when the tide is up; and some of the girls there whom we have spoken to have never been in any other house. Mr. Baring-Gould does not describe these dwellings; but he has a great deal to say about others that are more interesting. Very curious is his account of the souterrains. They have mostly been used in times of war, in days of persecution, and by robbers. It is remarkable that in war-time civilisation finds the same refuge as primitive man did. During the various sieges in the Boer War, the besieged practically lived underground. In early times what very often happened was that those who were attacking such fugitives did not venture inside, but pursued the easy task of suffocating them by placing a fire outside. In his discourse Mr. Baring-Gould dwells naturally on the Dene Holes or Danes' Pits at East Tilbury, Crayford and Little Thurrock. His theory is that they were chalk quarries, but they might also have been flint quarries such as are still to be found at Brandon in Suffolk. This would not at all interfere with the tradition that they were used as hiding-places at the time of the Danish invasion. It often happened in early times that a hermit or recluse sought out a solitary cavern in which to perform his penances. That was the case with St. Sorus or Sour, about the year 500:

A rock very lofty furnished him above with a shelter that sufficed; out of the flanks of the rocks issued a spring and watered the little valley that was on the other side surrounded by the Vézère.

Many instances are brought forward by the author of people in this country having had recourse to this method of hiding. At times of persecution the religious victims, Covenanters and so on, hid from the Cavaliers in caves, rock fastnesses or desolate mountains, whence they often emerged at night, searching for food and succour from the friendly inhabitants. Thus, according to the general explanation, arose the stories of good brownies who did the work of the farmhouse for nothing except a little shelter and a dish of porridge. But rocks afforded hiding on a scale of greater magnitude. In the days of mediæval armour great seigneurs found protection among the rocks, and built their castles in or on them. Much curious historical knowledge is brought to bear upon these singular structures, and the descriptions are very much helped out by the illustrations. We quote, as one example out of many, the description of Burgstein, a curious cliff castle in Bohemia:

It consists of an isolated mass of sandstone springing out of level land, an outlying block of the Schwoik chain. Formerly it rose out of a lake or marsh, but this is now drained. The entrance is through a narrow gap in the rock by a flight of steps that lead into a court on all sides surrounded by sheer precipices except towards the north-west, where a gap was closed by a wall. Out of this court open caves, one was formerly the smithy, another the guard-room, a third the stable, and in a recess is the well. From the court access to the main structure is obtained by a rift in the sandstone commanded by the guard-room, and up which ascends a stair of 15 steps that leads to a second rift at right angles, up which leads a further stair of 76 steps, and from the landing 37 descend to a lower portion of the rock, a platform with a breastwork of wall, important for defence of the entrance.

The steps lead to various chambers, and to an open court that looks out over the precipice, and has on one side scooped out of the rock a watchman's

chamber, and on the other an armoury, where pilasters on each side supported shelves on which helmets and breastplates were laid; and beyond this is a guard-room. The summit of the rock has on it a lantern that lights an underground chapel, and formerly contained a bell, also a modern summer-house. As the rock was commanded from the south by a spur of the Schwoik range, when cannon were introduced, a new mode of access was devised on the north side, a passage in loops was constructed leading to the upper court.

It is one of the most elaborate of the cliff structures. The Church, as well as the Army, took advantage of underground chambers. The example was set by those who assembled in the tombs of the martyrs at Rome. Many of them have springs of water that are still believed to have healing properties owing to the sanctity imparted to them by the saints. An interesting chapter is devoted to robbers' dens, perhaps all the more interesting because writers of fiction, especially those of the eighteenth century, have so familiarised us with the stories of outlaws leading their wild lives in them. The most notorious of the robbers was Humphrey Kynaston. He was outlawed in the eighth year of Henry VII., and he thereupon found or made for himself a refuge in the face of the cliff of Ness. He cut a flight of steps in the side of a projecting buttress, scooped out a doorway and made two chambers, one to serve as a stable for his horse, the other as a habitation for himself. His doings are related partly as history, partly as tradition. He had two wives, both Welsh girls whom he carried off but married. Many daring feats are recorded of him. In one of them he is said to have been on the further side of the Severn, and the Sheriff commanded to be removed several planks of Montford Bridge, by which he was expected to return. In due course he came to the Severn bridge and prepared to cross, whereupon his pursuers closed in behind and thought him entrapped.

But the outlaw spurred his horse, which leaped the gap, and he escaped. A farmer, who had been looking on, so the legend tells, called out, "Kynaston, I will give thee ten cows and a bull for thy horse." "Get thee first the bull and cows that can do such a feat," shouted the outlaw in reply, "and then we will effect the exchange."

The leap of Kynaston's horse was measured and marked out on Knockin Heath, and cut in the turf, with the letters H. K. at each end.

These are but samples of the reading in a book packed with good matter from beginning to end.

GOD'S BEGGAR.

The Straits of Poverty, by Ella Macmahon. (Chapman and Hall.)

THIS is a clever and thoughtful study of a complex character and temperament only possible in an age like ours, when feeling and ambition are both so highly stimulated. It is unusual to find a woman writer taking a man as her predominant character, and it is still more unusual to find her doing so with such success; nor does it in any way detract from the ability and interest of the treatment that she naturally succeeds better with the emotional and, so to say, private side of her subject than with the public and business side of him. Flint is a curious mixture of the sentimentalist and the business man, a mixture so common in America that it may be said to be making America. He climbs up from a poverty bitter and grinding—from the impression and effect of which he never completely recovers—to wealth and to superabundant success, both in love and business. The details of his climbing are exceedingly well and graphically described. But there is not only observation and thought in Miss Macmahon's story; there is also a central idea, of which she never loses sight, and which is expressed in the motto she chooses for her title-page. One by one, Flint, in his vigorous and triumphant vitality, overcomes all the obstacles to the completeness of his victory. For Flint has feeling. He cannot rest till all approve of him as well as yield to him. Margery, the rich and beautiful wife whom he adores, and who is alienated from him by the unscrupulousness of his business methods; Geoffrey, the born aristocrat, poor, refined and clever, to whom the flaws in Flint's character are as obvious as cracks in glass—they all fall into line at last and acknowledge the worth and value of him. And yet—and here comes in Miss Macmahon herself, quietly watchful, the only observer who preserves unblinded the correct estimate of the hero she treats with such sympathy and understanding—Flint is "God's beggar" still. Only his author knows how keenly Flint himself feels that there is something he cannot force into acquiescent acknowledgment of his talent and his triumph—how keenly he resents the uncertainty of the tenure on which he holds what he has won so hardily. Thus we leave him, as we found him, in the straits of poverty, God's beggar still.

ATHENA.

Jane Oglander, by Mrs. Belloc Lowndes. (Heinemann.)

THE restraint and fine feeling which characterise the work of Mrs. Belloc Lowndes are very evident here, where she is dealing with the difficult subject of a wanton and her victims. Athena Maule is a type, unluckily not unknown, of the well-born, highly-placed woman, corrupt in mind and soul, insatiable of the conquest of man, and absolutely incapable even of seeing the path of honour and unselfishness. There is no man who has come near her whom she has not at one time or another enslaved and degraded; there is no woman she has not robbed. She is like an evil disease, infecting and destroying the peace and honour of all who approach her; and she remains perfectly self-satisfied and virtuous, full of self-excusing and self-pity, bitter with the fate which ties her in her youth and beauty to an invalid husband. It is a merciless and exceedingly clever *exposé*. Mrs. Lowndes's art is such that only gradually, just as it dawned on those around her, does the full vileness of the beautiful and natural Athena dawn on the reader; but when the conviction at last arrives, it does so with such a shock that her painless and peaceful removal by her husband arouses no protest. He did it that the honour of

no more men and the happiness of no more women might be wrecked by the insatiable selfishness that only death could check. He did well. The destruction of Athena by the man who knows and hates her as only the husband of such a woman could know and hate her, is a powerful and legitimate climax to a most convincing study. But in one point Mrs. Lowndes fails, and that is in the character of Jane Oglander, the good and unselfish woman who is the fiancée of General Lingard and the last victim of Athena Maule. That Mrs. Lowndes should have repeated the old foolish fallacy and made her good woman, as opposed to the wicked woman, so stupid and so simple, and so exceedingly uninteresting, is strange. It destroys half the vigour and effect of the book. Jane Oglander should have fought, and *would* have fought, with all her wit and heart to save her lover. She gave him no chance, nothing to turn to, nothing to hold to, against the woman whose weapon was her beauty. Passive, feeble and uninteresting, it is a pity, and it is essentially untrue to life—it is the repetition of a silly fallacy—that in the person of submissive and ineffective Jane Oglander should be represented the forces of goodness. Mrs. Lowndes has lost the chance of a great contrast and the opportunity of rendering a struggle between two great feminine types by this stereotyped representation of her good woman as being without wit, brains, sense, strength or character. She has painted wickedness so well that it is a thousand pities she could not do goodness greater justice.

THE WEST OF ENGLAND.

The Witch Ladder, by E. S. Tylee. (Duckworth.)

A SOMERSET novel of much interest and real humour. The Somerset peasant characters have real wit and pith. Mr. Parracombe is especially delightful; so is Mr. Barley, who outwits everyone in the most successful manner. The unmasking of a villain, the nobility of a hero and a very pretty love-story add incident to the tale; but the virtuous and the well-born characters are neither quite so successful nor so amusing as the Somerset worthies who give it real life and zest.

"JOHN OLIVER HOBBS."

The Life of John Oliver Hobbes told in her Correspondence with Numerous Friends, with a Biographical Sketch by her Father, John Morgan Richards, and an Introduction by the Right Rev. Bishop Welldon, Dean of Manchester. (Murray.)

AN interesting sidelight is thrown on the literary circles of the late nineteenth century by this biography. It possesses many obvious advantages through being written by the subject's father. Mr. Morgan Richards does not pretend to any great literary skill; he is more of a business man than an artist. But, on the other hand, he possesses an intimate knowledge of his daughter's early life and subsequent development, and he has also the keen interest of one who does not write in the letters, compositions and conduct of the prominent people of his own time. We say prominent because of reluctance to use the word "famous." Mrs. Craigie took herself very seriously, and was able to make both the general public and people of distinction do the same thing. Mr. Morgan Richards seems to have treasured every scrap of congratulation sent to her on

the publication of a book or the appearance of a play. He also dwells with paternal care on the incidents of her life and death, her journeyings to and fro, her visits to the great, her periods of retirement, even her stayings at hotels and boarding-houses, up to the time of her funeral, when he embellishes his page with a view of her tombstone. The end justifies the means. He works out in his own way the living picture of a highly-gifted and most energetic woman who made the most of every minute of her existence. Her physique might be frail, but her vitality was inexhaustible. Needless to say, there are many passages in the book that might lead to piquant argument. We cannot touch on all of them, but a very typical example is to be found in the course of a series of letters to Mr. Lewis Hind, who edited the *Academy* when it belonged to her father, *à propos* of the famous scheme of nominating members of a British academy, which ended, if we recollect rightly, in the crowning of Mr. Stephen Phillips and the awarding of a prize to Mr. Maurice Hewlett. She is led on to a discussion of literary vulgarity. It would have been most amusing to have cross-examined her on her definition of the word "vulgar." We can scarcely gather it from her list. We can see easily enough that Fielding, Tolstoy, Eliot and Balzac were not vulgar, and nobody would dream of saying that Jane Austen was; but why is Thackeray vulgar? And why is Dickens not vulgar? If taste, refinement, restraint make for vulgarity, then Thackeray cannot escape, but not otherwise. William Morris is "vulgarity itself"; Stevenson "vulgar, very"; Ibsen, "diseased, not vulgar." Why such an accusation is brought against William Morris is a puzzle to which we can only suggest the answer that affectation is always vulgar, and Morris, who seemed to have very little of this in his private life, nevertheless wrote a Wardour Street English that was far from being natural. Readers have often wondered if Mrs. Craigie in the course of her life ever came into contact with poor, labouring men and women who had no refinement except what good instinct had made for them. Our memory (which we admit to be a rather vague one) of her own novels is a confused medley of dukes and earls and countesses and other people of high degree. If she ever painted a real man or woman with none of the advantages conferred by birth, education, training or environment, it must have been too feeble to stand out. It is this recollection which makes one hesitate to classify her with Stevenson or with Dickens. The retort is obviously invited; just as the author of the "Book of Snobs" lays himself open to the retort that only a snob could have written so about snobbery. We must be content to whet the curiosity of the reader by a reference to this engaging paragraph. The book is certain to be popular since the admirers of the works of "John Oliver Hobbes" may very properly regard the letters from and to that gifted lady as an intellectual feast.

BOOKS TO ORDER FROM THE LIBRARY.

Dwellers on the Threshold, by Robert Hichens. (Methuen.)
The Reign of the Saints, by John Trevena. (Alston Rivers.)
Le Gentleman, by Ethel Sidgwick. (Sidgwick and Jackson.)
The Swing of the Pendulum, by X. Marcel Boulestin and Francis Toye. (Eveleigh Nash.)
Tales of the Uneasy, by Violet Hunt. (Heinemann.)
The House of Bondage, by C. G. Compton. (Heinemann.)

O'ER FIELD AND FURROW.

AS the hunting season draws to its close, larger fields assemble even at the less popular fixtures. Men and women desire to snatch every moment of time available. Hunting is for some of us practically our only recreation, since we spend our spare money and time on it and have none left for anything else. The summer months are comparatively blank days. But it is perhaps at this time that the Master of Hounds has his reward. The summer is no idle season in fox-hound kennels; and talking last week to an M.F.H. after an afternoon on the flags, he told me that to him the summer was as interesting as the winter, and that the days were not long enough for all he had to do. One absorbing interest is to be found in the puppies; at least, to the Master who breeds his own pack. To see how the young hounds reproduce the outward form and the characteristics of their parents, and as training goes on show similarities of temper, form an interesting study. In most provincial countries nowadays the Master cannot expect success unless he spends the summer with his hounds. It is rather a hard saying for young Masters; but, at all events in their earlier seasons, it is better to stay at home and look after their hounds and visit the farmers and make friends with the keepers than to go off to play polo or cricket.

Fortunately, good sport has marked these last days, and the Quorn meeting at Hungarton last Friday had a continuance of the fortune which has made the past season full of satisfaction for the followers. A John o' Gaunt fox, taking a line over Marefield towards Tilton, and then turning by Lowesby and Twyford back towards the starting-point, gave a capital hunt. He was caught near the railway viaduct. There was a second gallop equally good. The day was marred by the accident to Mrs. Hepworth, whose horse struck the top rail of a timber fence and turned a somersault, injuring its rider's back.

Thus the month of March has been a remarkable one for sport, and foxes have fulfilled our expectations and hopes by making long points and giving what we are accustomed to call "old-fashioned hunts." It cannot be too often repeated, especially when some hunts are threatened with dissolution in consequence of a scarcity of foxes, that long runs and historic hunts can only be had where old foxes are allowed to live. It is not only the shooting-man or his keeper, who will not keep foxes at all, who spoils our sport, but those who systematically kill off the old foxes and leave a young, immature and inexperienced stock. I use the last words advisedly, because I am convinced that if a fox survives to be three or four years old, he has learnt a great deal about hunting, or perhaps I should say about being hunted, which is not only serviceable to him in preserving his life, but is exceedingly

useful to us in providing us with sport. With regard to the great run in Mr. Fernie's country, there is a difference of opinion as to the number of foxes hunted. My own idea is that there were three, that the first fox made his escape in Orton Park Wood, that the second ran to Marefield and on to John o' Gaunt, but that on the way to the covert hounds struck the line of a Cottesmore traveller, which was the third fox and the one they killed at last. He took exactly the line a Cottesmore fox would take, and when he found the hounds pressing on him, turned away from his point to look for refuges in Burrough Hill at Somerby. There is nothing inconsistent in the line he took with his original point being Prior's Coppice, but the noteworthy fact is that all three foxes were good ones and knew a great deal of the country, and were presumably of mature age.

This week, when we have great exploits of foxes to record, these sketches come in rather appropriately. One of them illustrates the cleverness of a fox in dodging hounds, and was drawn from an occurrence observed by the artist. He writes: "The fox listening to hounds in the sketch is the result of a rather unusual opportunity of studying a fox. We had run a fox into a covert on the side of acombe in the high part of the Duke's country. We were able to watch him from the other face of the hill as he dodged hounds for a long time. He often sat down within a few yards of them. At last the ground became so foiled that the pack seemed quite unable to make anything of the scent. By this time, too, the covert had been thoroughly worked. There were several other foxes afoot. On to one of these he managed to shift the burden of the chase, the fresh fox broke just below us, and the hounds after him. The covert consisted mostly of long, dead grass and a little scrub, which did not hide the fox from us, though it seemed to do so from the hounds." What took place here no doubt often happens, only we are unable to see the fox carrying out the strategy by which he shifts the hounds on to another. One striking thing in this incident is that the fox was clearly watching the hounds while they trusted only to their noses, and this is one of the things that give the fox a certain superiority to hounds. They practically only use one sense, that of smell, while he makes use of his quick sight as well.

Lord Middleton's Hunt stands alone in some respects among the Hunts of the United Kingdom. The hounds and their kennels, the horses and their stabling, are the property of the Master. The hounds and the horses are bred at Birdsall, and for thirty-four years the Master has maintained the Hunt for some time at his own expense, and latterly with a small subscription which has never exceeded £1,700 a year. The Master now finds it necessary to ask

for more assistance from the members of the Hunt, and the subscription is to be raised to £2,500, even now not a very large sum for the establishment maintained for this Hunt. Lord Middleton's is a hunt well over forty miles in length, and like all extensive



BREAKING COVER.

countries is costly to hunt, long journeys by road taxing the powers of horse and hound. On the other hand, those who live in the country obtain a great deal of hunting, for the Master is able to make a long season. The pack is a very old one, the kennel books going back more than a century and a-half, and absorbing during that time the hounds, very famous in their day for work and quality, of Sir Mark and the still more famous Sir Tatton Sykes.

The present Master has been keen on breeding hounds for work, and the names of Belvoir Stormer, Vagabond, Brocklesby Wrangler, and Lord Middleton's own Waggoner (a hound most useful to the pack), a son of Grafton Whynot, probably the famous Woodman's best working hound, tell with what judgment the lines famous for work have been picked. Sport has been very good, especially since Tom Bishop has been huntsman. The committee resolved to cap, and the reason for this is to be found in the situation of the Hunt, which makes its fixtures often more convenient for members of the York and Ainsty and the Holderness than for those of their own Hunt. The appeal for funds met with a ready response, and there is no doubt that this famous and historic pack will go on in the future as in the past.

The Badby Wood run with the Pytchley was ancient history before its story reached me. It was, so to speak, a historic line for this pack, from Badby to Bucknells. Turning over the records of the Pytchley Hunt in old times, I had noted how often Badby foxes made good points into the Grafton country. The knowledge this fox showed of possible refuges at both ends of this long chase, in which hounds nearly achieved a twelve-mile point, seems to point to the fact that the foxes of this district learn a great deal of the country in the course of their lives. For one thing, with Freeman on one side and Mr. McNeill on the other, these

foxes must learn to travel if they mean to live. It is interesting, too, to note that this great run, which certainly will take rank among the long roll of historic hunts in the Pytchley country, began in Badby Wood, the worst-scenting covert in the Pytchley, and ended at Bucknells, an equally bad scenting one in the Grafton. Indeed, in this last-named stronghold, with a fading scent and a failing fox, there would have been no kill unless Lord Dalmeny had learned to distinguish a hunted fox from a fresh one—which is not so easy a thing to do as might seem to those who do not know how a fox can pull himself together when he knows he is seen. The hounds did their work exceedingly well, and it is said that two couple and a-half were never off the line during the whole of this long run. It would be pleasant to record their names, if one knew them. It is, perhaps, needless to say that many of the pursuers did not reach the end, and indeed it takes an exceptionally good horse to see a run over a strongly-fenced country in which a good deal of plough occurred and which lasted for two hours and three-quarters.

The new pack of harriers in the Isle of Wight, or, rather, I should say the old pack with a new Master, have done well, and Mrs. Hobart, who hunts her hounds herself, has shown good sport over the island. Mrs. Davenport has on more than one occasion acted as whipper-in. I note that the Essex Union are advertising for a Master, and conclude that Captain Godfrey Heseltine will not go on. As to the future of the Hunt I know nothing.

It would indeed be a pity if the historic Old Berkeley (West) were given up; but after reading the account of the meeting, it seems quite clear that no Masters could be expected to hunt a country under the conditions which appear to exist. It is worth



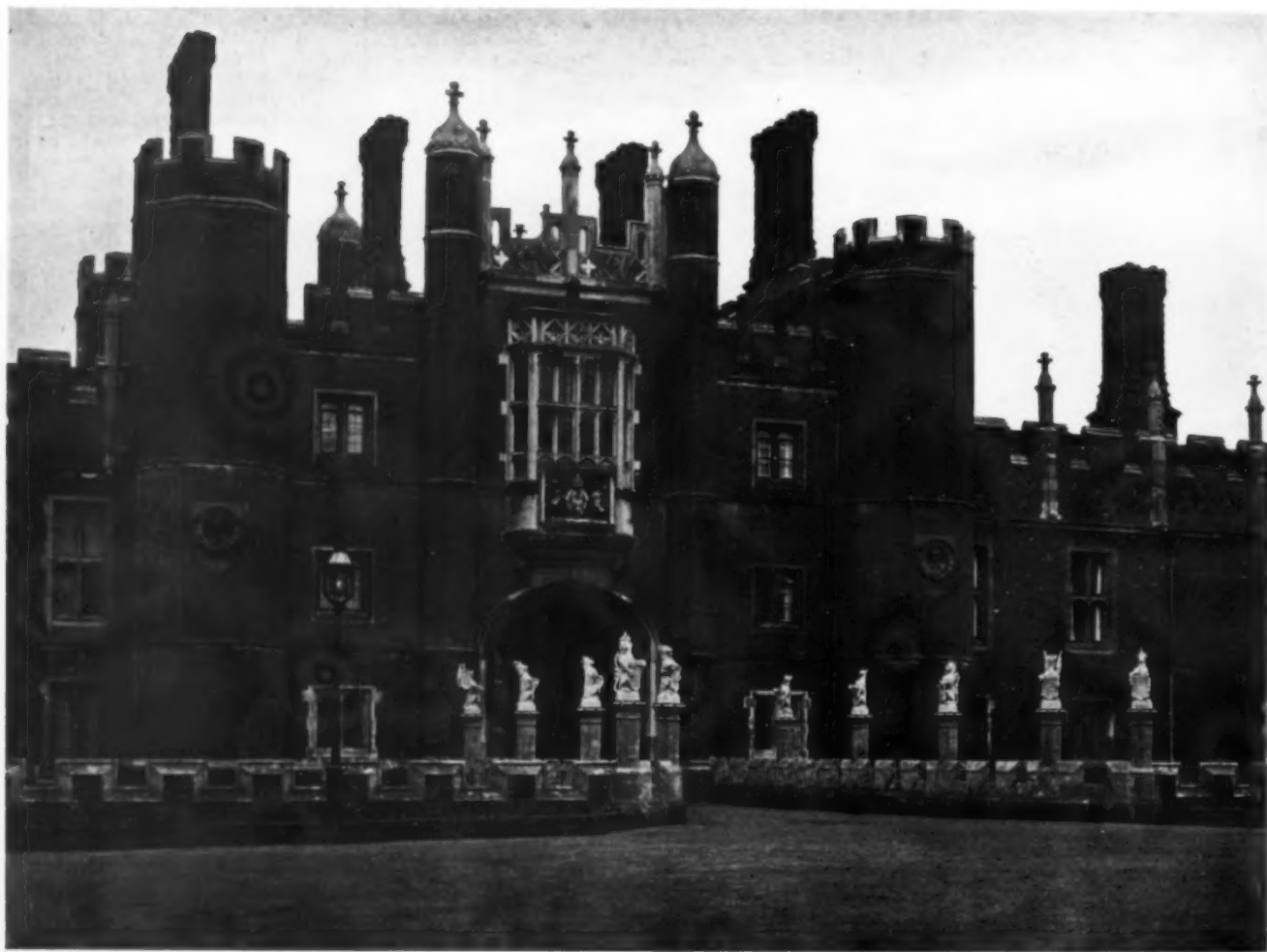
WATCHING THE HOUNDS.

noting that if foxes are in a covert, hounds will find them; but that it is quite useless to think that a keeper has foxes because one or more may be seen in the covert, or to blame a Master because the whole of a big covert is not drawn. Everyone who understands

foxes and their ways knows that even in well-preserved coverts foxes do not lie anywhere or everywhere; they have their favourite lairs, and it is waste of time to look for them elsewhere. If a keeper has foxes, he ought to know pretty well where they are likely to

be. When he does not know, the chances are either that he is incompetent or has no foxes. In a covert that holds no foxes they will be seen sometimes, as they resort there to see what they can pick up after a big shoot. X.

THE "KYNGE'S BEESTES."



THE KYNGE'S BEESTES AT HAMPTON COURT.

THE discovery and restoration of Henry VIII's Bridge and Moat at Hampton Court have been fully described and illustrated in *COUNTRY LIFE* from time to time as the work has proceeded, and the view published to-day completes the record by showing the pinnacles which rise from the parapets of the bridge, surmounted with heraldic "Kynge's and Queny's Beestes" of carved stone—five on one side and five on the other—which were placed in position a few days ago. The result may be declared to be as fine and striking as it is certainly archaeologically correct, these curious and interesting embellishments being exact reproductions, as far as it was possible to make them, of their prototypes of 1536.

As Mr. Ernest Law explained in *The Times* last Monday, the authority for the details of this part of the restoration is contained in the original accounts, discovered by him in the Record Office, for the "making, cutting, carvyng and fleneshyng" of these "beestes"—then twelve in all. They bore shields with the Royal Arms; and those just erected support similar shields carved with the coats of arms and the various badges and devices of Henry VIII. and Jane Seymour. These are arranged alternately, and in the view here presented they may be easily identified. Beginning on the right hand, they are: The Unicorn, for the Queen (the Seymour Arms), the Dragon (Arms of England), the Lion (the Queen's badge of a castle), the Bull (England again), the Panther (England and Seymour). On the left is first the Lion (England and Seymour Arms), then the Panther (Seymour wings), the Greyhound (the Tudor Rose), the "Jall" or "Yale" (Seymour Arms) and the Dragon (the Portcullis). When the bridge was originally built, there was a further pinnacle on either side, close up against the wall of the gatehouse, surmounted by another "beeste";

but the places for these are now occupied, as may be seen in our view, by the two modern octagonal buttresses which flank the gate, and were erected in 1881.

The "Jall" just mentioned is a most strange and monstrous beast, which makes his first re-appearance here after nearly four hundred years of withdrawal from the fields of heraldry. He is known only by a drawing in the Heralds' College, and a stall shield of Sir John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset in 1440, in St. George's Chapel at Windsor, and one or two carvings at Cambridge. The "Jall" was one of the supporters of Henry FitzRoy, Henry VIII.'s illegitimate son, whom his father created Duke of Somerset. The young Duke died a few months before this bridge was completed, and King Henry then adopted the "Yale" as his own. Hence its appearance on this parapet—savage and fierce, with great horns, long tusks and grinning teeth, and a stumpy, bush-like tail. He has been suggested as a suitable heraldic device for Yale College, United States of America, and as probably alone capable, were he to give tongue, of vying with the "Yale yell," for which that seat of learning is celebrated.

The carving of the original "Yale" and other "beestes" cost Henry VIII. twenty-six shillings each, the lot of twelve, therefore, fifteen pounds twelve shillings; but the value of money then was ten to fifteen times as great as it is now. The new ones have been admirably designed by the Rev. E. E. Dorling, partly modelled on similar beasts with shields at Hengrave Hall, which was described and illustrated in *COUNTRY LIFE* last April. The carving is excellently done in the old spirit and is the work of an artist in stone, employed by Messrs. Farmer and Brindley of Westminster Bridge Road.

The hundreds of thousands who will flock to Hampton Court in this Coronation Year from all parts of the British Isles

and from the uttermost shores of the British Empire will find few things in this grand romantic monument and symbol of England's past more stimulating to the historic imagination than this restored bridge of Tudor times.

IN THE GARDEN.

HOME-GROWN GIANT ASPARAGUS.

THE French have grown Giant Asparagus for the English markets for many years, and secured, in consequence, a great monopoly in the cultivation of a plant which is a native of Britain, and flourishes as well in our soil and climate as it does in France. Why an industry so well suited to our country, and proved so profitable to French gardeners, has not gained a more extended and solid footing in this country is one of those mysteries which no one can understand. Of this industry in France, Mr. William Robinson in his book, "Parks and Gardens of Paris," published many years ago, says "the country in many places round Paris is half covered with Asparagus-beds. Everybody grows it and everybody eats it. In the district of Argenteuil alone there are upwards of three thousand persons employed in its culture." True, greater attention has been given of late years to its growth by English market-gardeners, and notably by the gardeners of the Vale of Evesham and Colchester, who, in limited quantities, supply the market in season with Asparagus equal in size and in every other respect to the giant specimens imported from France. In my opinion there is a much better prospect of profitable returns being obtained from the investment of money in the growth and forcing of Asparagus on a large scale in this country than in the investment of money in so-called French gardening, and that at comparatively small cost, while the work is light and pleasant and full of interest all the year round, as by a systematic method of growing and forcing this greatly-prized, valuable and delicious vegetable may be placed on the market from the end of October to the end of July. The work has the further advantage that it can be carried out, as far as the cultivator is concerned, in the open air.

A deep, rather sandy loam is the best, and the worst soil is of a heavy, cold, clayey nature. However, any soil of fairly good quality ranging between these two extremes will grow the best of Asparagus. It is seldom that one hears of Asparagus being killed by frost, yet I have known this to result in the North Midlands after an unusually severe winter when the soil is heavy and cold. I mention this not to discourage its growth in those parts, but to point out that in such cold districts the roots should be planted almost on a level with the surface of the soil, raising up the beds a considerable height with soil from either side, like earthing up Celery, the furrows on each side caused by the soil dug out forming excellent drainage for the beds at all times.

The first step to ensure successful growth of the Giant Asparagus is space to develop the root-stock to its full capacity and a rich soil for it to luxuriate in. The plant forms enormous masses of thick, fleshy roots of considerable length. It is no exaggeration to say that the root-stock of one plant, five or six years old, properly grown on this system, would fill the centre of an ordinary wheelbarrow, and the crown of the root which produces the giant grass is on a commensurate scale.

The method most commonly adopted in its growth, and which, in my opinion, is the best, is to plant in rows, the rows to be four feet apart, and the roots in the rows three feet. This method of culture will, perhaps, be better understood if I confine my remarks to the planting of one row only; others, of course, can be added indefinitely where desired.

In preparing the row for planting, it must not be forgotten that such a row if left undisturbed and the plants properly looked after will be profitable, after the third year of planting, for from twenty-five to thirty-five years or longer, and therefore any little extra expense in the way of labour and manure incurred in the preparation of the soil before planting should not be omitted. Having decided on the ground, the first thing to do is to line out a space four feet wide by cutting a notch on either side with the spade, and then proceed to trench the ground from two and a-half to three feet deep—the latter depth if the soil is deep, and the former or less when the soil is more shallow, bearing in mind not to bring the poor bottom soil to the top in either case. Add, and well mix with the soil as trenching proceeds, a ton of rich farmyard manure to every ten yards of the row. Partly-decayed seaweed, if available, could be mixed with the manure to the extent of one-fourth. As this is rich in potash and soda compounds, it is a good manure for many vegetables. Having finished the trenching, proceed now to form a shallow trench in the middle of the row nine inches deep and fifteen inches wide, using the soil so taken out to form a ridge on either side of the trench. The next thing to do is to form small mounds of soil in the middle of the trench

at three feet apart, on which to plant the Asparagus roots. These little mounds of soil should be about seven inches wide at their base and four inches high, tapering to a point at the top. Place a root on the top of each mound and press it in firmly, so that the under concave part of the root is well bedded in the soil, serving each root in the same way until the full row is planted. Afterwards cover the roots with three inches of soil and fill the whole of this centre trench to the same height as the soil over the roots, pressing the whole down firmly and evenly with the back of an iron rake. This work should be carried out if possible while the soil is comparatively dry. The planting of the row is now completed. The soil on either side may be planted with any summer vegetable desired, such as early Potatoes, Cauliflowers, French Beans, Spinach, or Lettuce. The Asparagus will require no further attention now until the autumn, except that the ground round about must be kept free from weeds and occasionally watered in very dry weather. Every plant must also be supported by stakes, not only the first year, but every year as long as the crop stands.

The third year after planting, when a good return should first be obtained, no other crop must be taken off the ground by the side of the Asparagus, as the whole of the four-foot space will now be practically filled with the roots of the plants. The cultural details will be just the same each year, namely, the clearing off of the worn-out top-dressing in autumn and spring, substituting for it new layers of fresh loam and manure with a sprinkling of bone-meal round the collar of the plants, adding heavy top-dressings of manure alone over the four-foot space between the plants.

Blanching of Asparagus is brought about by covering the crown of the plants with fine soil in April before growth begins to the depth one wishes the shoots to be blanched. The plants may be safely put in at any time between the last week in March and the second week in April. One year old plants are preferable to older ones. Seeds should be sown the last week in March. Asparagus roots are very susceptible to injury by exposure to the air; they should be planted as soon as possible after they have been taken up. OWEN THOMAS, V.M.H.

AGRICULTURAL NOTES.

THE WOOD-PIGEON.

THE wood-pigeon, with his handsome blue-grey plumage and gentle note, is generally regarded as a most harmless bird, not a blackguard like the rook, but a most respectable member of society who spends most of his time "billing and cooing," unless reposing in a pie. Ask the agriculturist. He knows the wood-pigeon as a vegetarian with an insatiable



C. Reid. AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE. Copyright.

appetite. Unlike the rook, the pigeon scorns worms and grubs for himself, although I believe he has been known to provide them for his young when they are very small. In short, excepting that he eats a few roots and seeds of weeds, the wood-pigeon in no way compensates the farmer for the heavy damage that he does to his corn and growing crops.

In the spring wood-pigeons pick up corn and peas which the harrow has failed to cover; but their chief food is the young leaves of clover, sainfoins, trefoil, etc., and I have known fields of these "seeds" practically ruined by flocks of pigeons, the herbage being

almost as closely cropped as would be the case if geese had eaten it off. Wood-pigeons are also very fond of lucerne and vetches or tares when they are young and tender. The latter crop especially is very much retarded in its growth when it is devoured quite close to the ground by pigeons. Peas, however, seem to be the favourite food of the pigeon, either when the young plants are just out of the ground and the stems and leaves are juicy, or later on when the pods are formed and the seed can be picked out. The young plants of cabbages, kohl-rabi and swedes are also a great temptation to the rapacious appetites of these destructive birds, who soon strip every vestige of green from the leaves of the tender seedlings, leaving only the bare stalks. At harvest-time the pigeons flock to the corn-fields, selecting the spots where the crop has been laid low by storm or wind, or where it has been cut and stands in "stooks" or "shocks." It is in the winter months that farmers suffer most from the pigeon plague, more especially in a season when there is a scarcity of acorns or beech-nuts, which are greedily devoured by wood-pigeons. In the late autumn our home-bred pigeons are joined by huge flocks of their fellows which migrate to these shores probably from Norway and Sweden. Fields of rape, cabbage, turnip-tops and other green food which the careful flockmaster has treasured up as food for his sheep and lambs in the spring form an ideal feeding-ground for thousands of hungry pigeons, and a very large acreage of valuable sheep feed has this year been stripped by them. A casual observer who first saw some of these fields might easily suppose that they had been visited by a plague of caterpillars or locusts, so bare have they been plucked by pigeons. It is almost impossible to estimate the damage done to agricultural produce every year by wood-pigeons, but it must amount to many thousands of pounds.

How best to prevent this damage is a difficult question. It is easy to say, "It is the farmer's own fault; why does not he employ boys to frighten pigeons from his crops?" (a) The pigeon rises far earlier than "the bird-scarer" and quickly flies to the field he selects on which to breakfast, and by the time the boy, if you can

get one, appears the pigeon has made a hearty meal. (b) The farmer, as a rule, cannot obtain sufficient boys; they are compelled to be at school. The only practical method that I know of, and one which is adopted in my locality, where we have swarms of pigeons, is as follows: As soon as pigeons are seen to be feeding on a field, a hut, or huts, composed of branches of trees, should be erected at a spot which the pigeons are seen to frequent. After a few days, even if this screen is in the centre of an open field, the pigeons soon become accustomed to it. Concealed in such a hiding-place, one can often obtain good sport shooting the pigeons, which should be attracted by decoy birds or dummies.

This year I have known over a hundred pigeons killed from one hut in a day. The hut should be large enough to enable one to swing the gun. I find that, if someone can spend a whole day shooting at pigeons as soon as they first start feeding on a field, they become frightened and are no more trouble for some time. As a means of slaughtering pigeons the best plan is to organise a shoot, which should extend to every wood in a radius of many miles from a given spot. On a certain day, or days, a gun, or guns, according to the size of the wood, should be placed in every covert about an hour or two before the pigeons usually come to roost. By this means the birds are kept continually on the wing, and as they visit first one wood and then another in their attempt to find a resting-place, some are sure to be killed, especially when they gradually become tired. The difficulty is that until the end of the shooting season it is impossible to get guns in every covert, because of disturbing the game. In a hunting country, too, I should imagine that a general shoot might be thought to disturb foxes. When this general battue is going on pigeons will soon discover "a sanctuary," hence a few woods remaining quiet upset the organised plan. If shooting (a) from huts and (b) at roosting-time, as far as possible, is practised, the numbers of pigeons soon diminish. To anyone fond of sport no better shooting can be had than that which the wily pigeon affords as he circles round or suddenly dives down into the covert in which he intends to spend the night. F. N. WEBB.

ON THE GREEN.

BY HORACE HUTCHINSON AND BERNARD DARWIN.

GOLF AT BIARRITZ.

IN few parts, even of his own dominions, is it likely that King Edward VII. is more sincerely regretted than at Biarritz. It is not only for selfish reasons that this regret is so universal in that town of the South of France, though there is not the least doubt that its established prosperity has received a check owing to our late King's lamented death. His kindness, however, had made him personally very much liked, and much of the regret comes from the heart. Although the visitors to Biarritz are not as many as last year, and the hotels are not filled, those English who are there seem to be very much intent on the great business of golf, so that the course is crowded enough still. Lord Lurgan, captain of the club, finds himself in even greater popularity than usual as a partner, because it is the privilege of his exalted office (the only one, except that of giving cups and prizes) that its holder may start whenever he likes.

BIARRITZ COURSE MUCH IMPROVED.

I believe that a great many people share in what was, until lately, my own vulgar error that the Biarritz course had lost something of late years by the building of houses on its once notorious "grouse moor," but since that heathery tract was ravished from it—possibly a blessing in disguise, which occurred many years ago now—it has suffered no further curtailment, and, on the whole, the course is both longer than it was and a deal improved. I speak as comparing its present state with that of six years back. Its putting greens have much more growth on them—it is said that Mr. Corrie, the secretary, sleeps on them, so assiduous is his



MR. J. F. IRELAND, THE CAMBRIDGE CAPTAIN.

attention—some of the holes have been made longer by carrying back the tees, and the greens have been guarded, in many instances, by new bunkers, and sand has been carted into all the bunkers, whether the new or the old. And yet, in spite of all this, the course is probably easier than it was. This is a paradox; but the simple explanation is that in the old days the chief hazards at Biarritz were the villainously bad lies through the green and the trickiness of the putting greens. The putting greens are true enough now, a great war against worms having been waged with sulphate of copper, and with deadly effect, and the lies through the green are as good as on many a course which assumes far higher golfing graces and virtues.

COURSES IN THE PYRENEES.

All along the Pyrenees they are making golf courses now, and across the mountains in Spain there is still a need of them. The Basques have always been a great game-playing people, and their national "pelota," or ball-game, is certainly to be ranked as one of the greatest ball-games in the world. For all that, I am not sure that we have yet seen a true Basque golfer make any great hand at the Scottish game. Massy, as I understand, reckons himself a Frenchman, not a Basque, and so too Lafitte, his understudy, where he now is, on the wonderfully picturesque course of St. Jean de Luz. The St. Jean de Luz course, the new one, of eighteen holes, lies beside the Nivelle. Beside the Bidassoa, at Hendaye, the French town from which the train crosses into Spain, they have a course in the making. Right up in the hills, above Pau, at Argeles, is said to be the most beautifully-situated course in the whole

world. I do not believe it, because it has not the sea to form part of its beauty; but there it is, in any case, and with all these and others accessible to French and Spanish Basques and employing their sons as caddies, it will be a wonder if we do not have a first-rate Basque golfer very soon.

EFFECT OF ATMOSPHERE ON LENGTH OF DRIVES.

We have often heard discussions of the comparative lengths to which a golf ball can be driven in our own familiar and foggy islands and in certain lands beyond the seas, respectively. When our Oxford and Cambridge golfers came back from the tour on which they were so hospitably entertained in the United States, and in which, it may be added, they acquitted themselves very excellently, there were many of them ready to aver with great confidence that they could drive the ball a vast deal further there than here. The comparison has, of course, to be limited to the carry of the ball; the run must obviously depend on the nature of the surface of the ground and cannot be taken into the account. They had no explanation to offer of the reason of this supposed longer carry. A few thought it "had something to do with the atmosphere"; but they threw out the suggestion with all the air of suspecting it of inadequacy. Some have supposed that a ball will carry further in a dry than in a damp atmosphere; but that is hardly consistent with the known fact that atmospheric pressure is heavier in a dry air than in a moist. The converse ought to be more near the truth.

LONG CARRIES AT HIGH ALTITUDES.

I am obliged to confess that my own experience of golf on the Western side of the Atlantic does not confirm this idea of the longer flight of the ball here than there. There seems, however, to be no doubt whatever that when we go to courses which are at high elevations the ball will go quite appreciably further. I have been assured of this lately by a very good golfer who has played on the course at Potchefstroom in South Africa, which is at an altitude of something like five thousand feet, as I am informed. It is, to be sure, only natural that this should be so, for at these heights, as we all know, the pressure of the atmosphere is very considerably reduced. Perhaps the Pyrenees courses, such as that at Argeles, are not quite high enough. It would be interesting to hear experience bearing on the point, and actual measurements of drives taken on such courses as that in the neighbourhood of Mexico City, which is some two thousand feet higher again. Unfortunately, it is knowledge which is not likely to add distance to our drives at home; but still we should like to hear about it.

H. G. H.

UNIVERSITY PROSPECTS.

Next Tuesday will see Oxford and Cambridge meet at Rye for the first time in the history of the University match, and it may safely be said that they could have pitched on no worthier battle-field. I hesitate to go "prophesying" away like a red-faced Nixon" about the result, for the reason that about this match I always turn out to have prophesied exactly wrong. Last year I felt sure that Oxford would win, and they lost. That was capital, because I, of course, particularly desired a victory for Cambridge. Now this year I am clearly of opinion that Cambridge will win, wherefore I am afraid that my University's prospects must be of the darkest. Nevertheless, I venture to say that it will be a big surprise, though by no means the first in the history of University contests, if Cambridge do not win. On the form shown in trial matches they would appear to be better and more powerful players, and superior



MR. J. F. MYLES, THE OXFORD CAPTAIN.

length and power are bound to tell at Rye, where the tees will be a long way back and the wind will probably blow hard. On the Cambridge side Mr. Ireland and Mr. Carlisle are, on the whole, the best players, though the team is a very even and well-balanced one, and Mr. Prest, who brings up the rear, seems to have all the makings of a very fine golfer indeed. Of the Oxonians I should say that Mr. Holderness on his good days is perhaps the best. He has plenty of length and a sound and attractive style. His putting is rather an uncertain quantity, and some of the trial matches go to show that he is liable to collapse rather badly for a few disastrous holes. He will, I fancy, do well, however, though he will not have so easy a time of it as he did last year, when he ran off with a whole pocketful of holes.

THE RIVAL CAPTAINS.

The captains, Mr. Ireland of Cambridge and Mr. Myles of Oxford, are golfers of two rather different types. In length and power Mr. Ireland certainly has the advantage, for he can hit the ball a very long way, not only with his wooden clubs, but also with his irons. He is this year's captain of the cricket eleven, and has also played hockey for Cambridge, and he hits a golf ball in the fine free style of the natural player of ball games. Mr. Myles has not his rival's power, but he is a thoroughly steady, sound golfer, and in particular a very good putter. Although he has played some good rounds, he has, on the whole, been rather

out of luck this year; but I have an idea that, like many Scottish golfers, he is more at home by the sea than inland. For one thing, he drives a ball that depends a good deal for its length upon the run in the ground, and on inland courses in the winter the ball has too often a habit of sitting down where it falls. In last year's match at Hoylake Mr. Ireland had a good win over another big hitter, Mr. Denys Finch-Hatton, while Mr. Myles just lost a hard match with Mr. Kennedy, in which the latter played some fine golf. Whether the two captains will meet in the match I do not know, for this settling of the playing order is often a matter for much deep and subtle thought on the eve of the important day.

FAREWELL TO MR. ANDREW.

I read in my *Golf Illustrated* that Mr. "Bobby" Andrew is going to become a professional, and is shortly leaving for America. Scotland's loss is America's great gain, for Mr. Andrew is a truly magnificent golfer. Well as he has often done, I fancy that those who know him best and have played with him at Prestwick, St. Nicholas, would say that he has not really done himself justice in the amateur championship. He has always played finely in the International match, but in the championship itself he has seemed to tire and fall off after a round or two. He reached the semi-final round in 1909 at Muirfield, when he was beaten by Captain Hutchison; but his best performance was probably in the open championship at Prestwick in the preceding year. Then he was actually bracketed first in the qualifying competition, and with one of his two rounds he tied the record of the green. I shall not easily forget the enthusiasm among his local admirers when he laid a grand tee shot stone dead at the eighteenth hole in that memorable round, and so obtained the necessary two to equal the record. In the championship itself he fell away somewhat, but it remains a great achievement to have led a field comprising all the best professionals over two rounds of score play. Mr. Andrew is one of the most friendly and sporting of opponents, as I know well, having twice had the rather painful pleasure of playing against him in the International match, and together with hundreds of others I wish him all possible luck in America.

B. D.

("ON THE GREEN" IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 20*.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE DESTRUCTION OF OWLS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Mr. Collinson's account of the destruction of owls by gamekeepers is, I fear, but too true. Only a few days ago I entered a cottage garden to inspect the rows of birds, in various stages of decomposition, nailed to a shed. Among them were several sparrow-hawks, a beautiful kestrel (fresh killed) and a ger-falcon. The woman who was at home told me the order was to kill everything that would eat a partridge egg. Dead owls were kept out of sight (being "protected" in this country), but they are destroyed all the same. Game-preserving is most mischievous, and one cannot wonder that rats abound.—E. L. DAUBENNY, Pitville, Cheltenham.

OWLS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Your correspondent Mr. A. J. Roberts gives evidence that owls do kill birds, though we are often told by those who examine the casts that this cannot be so. Again, one thousand keepers will tell you that they do, and I can say I agree with Mr. Roberts. Two winters ago clouds of starlings, thousands, perhaps millions of them, used to settle in our laurels round this house, and the owls were heard disturbing them. To a window-ledge on the first floor fifteen heads of starlings were brought by, no doubt, the owls; each head, as Mr. Roberts says, was torn on the part over the (left) eye and the eye gone. Was it the eye or the brain that was the temptation? I may add that no sign was found of the bodies. Near the same place I found a pair of greenfinches killed and the left eye and skull with the same marks; also a sparrow. Last winter the starlings came as usual, but were disturbed by the owls and left early, and have not been at all this winter. I have not seen either the owl called the "little owl" or the "Strix Scops," smaller still, at this place; but I have known the Strix Scops elsewhere, and this kind will kill every partridge chick and drive the game and small birds clean off the ground. My keepers have seen an owl "go for" a cock pheasant at roost and drive him off the tree.—J. M. FIELDING, Belmont, Feversham.

FINGER AND TOE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In COUNTRY LIFE of November 12th, 1910, in the agricultural part there was an article on "Finger and Toe" in turnips, and giving a remedy. The writer says apply gas-line, but the mode of applying I do not quite understand. How is it to be sown (the gas-line) and still kept separate from other manures in the drills? I would esteem it a favour if the writer would explain fully how this is to be done. This place is very bad with this disease in my turnip crop. Last year the crop was entirely lost through it, so that any information to help me would be of great service.—J. R.

[The gas-line (after lying in a heap for a time, say, from one to two months) is riddled to take out rubbish. The riddle used for the purpose is just like those employed by masons and plasterers for riddling lime. It is then ready for sowing. The turnip drills are formed in the usual way, and the gas-line is sown with any suitable form of artificial manure distributor in the hollows between the drill ridges. If dung is to be used, it is applied, just as usual, immediately on top of the gas line, and if artificials are also used they are sown on top of the dung. If no dung is to be used, the artificials are sown immediately on top of the gas-line. Then the drills are split back in the ordinary way and the seed sown. The above is the plan followed by those North Country farmers, who have found gas-line, used in this way, to be a wonderfully efficient protection against finger and toe on badly-affected soils.—ED.]

ARCHITECTS' RESPONSIBILITIES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Most of your readers will, I think, like myself, read Mr. Quennell's letter from an employer's point of view. From the architect's point of view it is no doubt "hard lines" that he should suffer for the builder; but is not the existing system encouraged by the Royal Institute of British Architects responsible for this? They issue a printed form of building contract which, it seems to me, is largely designed to enable the builder to get rid of his liability in respect of any house he builds within a very limited period. The architect passes the house as completed according to contract (and to all outward appearance it is so) and issues his final certificate, thereby "white-washing" the builder; and yet, perhaps, within a year or two afterwards shrinkages, cracks and other faults appear which the employer is clearly entitled to have made good at someone's expense. It follows that when the architect has "white-washed" the builder, the employer has no other resource but to "go for" the architect. The fault is in the existing system. The form of building contract I refer to is too favourable to the builder. He should be responsible for all defects in material or workmanship whenever they appear. There should be no time-limit, or, if there is, it should be a much extended one. The builder is also in other respects too well taken care of nowadays. In the first place, the surveyor works out the quantities for him at the employer's expense, and the builder simply puts a price against each item. If the surveyor finds he has made a mistake in the quantities, he corrects it when he measures up the work at the end of the job—the builder takes no risks. He is protected by the contract against strikes, etc. He practically does very little beyond take his profit, as his foremen carry out the architect's instructions and work to details supplied by the latter. On the completion of the work the surveyor makes out the builder's bill for extras, also at the employer's expense, and after (as a rule) hearing only the builder's side of the question. I would suggest, however, that the builder should be left to make out his own bill for extras, and that the quantity surveyor, seeing that he is paid by the employer, should criticise it solely from the employer's point of view. The present state of things no doubt requires to be remedied as well from the employer's as from the architect's point of view, and Mr. Quennell is doing good service in ventilating the subject. Meanwhile, as matters stand, an architect will be wise if, before issuing his final certificate, he asks the builder to give and the employer to accept a written undertaking to make good all defects of material or construction whenever they appear, or, at any rate, within, say, five years.—Z.

CURIOUS SITE FOR A RABBIT'S NEST.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The platelayers here showed me a rabbit's nest scratched out from the level of the permanent way, so that you could see the young ones in the nest

just below the sleeper, quite open to anyone passing or to any vermin, over one hundred trains passing every twenty-four hours within certainly three inches of them. I think the confidence of this old doe is worthy of record.—FRANCIS ALVEY DARWIN, Bolton Lodge, Bolton Percy, R.S.O., Yorkshire.

A LEGAL POINT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Is a man when out with a gun entitled to shoot any pigeon he may see on the wing?—H. H.

[No; it is an offence, punishable summarily by a justice, unlawfully and wilfully to kill, wound or take any pigeon. Whether the shooting is lawful or unlawful depends on a variety of circumstances. Thus, a man may lawfully shoot wild pigeons on his own land, for they are *feræ naturæ*, and belong to no one; but he is not entitled to trespass, or to shoot pigeons over someone else's land. But tame pigeons, which have the *animus revertendi*, or the habit of returning to the pigeon house or loft to roost, remain constructively in the possession of their owner, and he may exercise both civil and criminal remedies against anyone who deprives him of his property without lawful excuse.—ED.]

PURITY OF FOOD.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Your praiseworthy notes this week have prompted me again to trouble you with my experience in regard to the weight and quality of bread and also the purity and cleanliness of milk. Some years since I wrote you advocating the use of the old-fashioned farmhouse bread instead of the white fancy bread in which the essential nourishing property of the wheat is "whitened" out of existence. I am glad to inform you that since my baker made it for me, and it became generally known, it is now made by all the bakers, and cards may be seen in their windows, with the words "Ye Old Farm House Bread" upon them, which are also painted on their delivery carts. It is now called "Standard Bread." Now we have the quality improved, it is, as you say, right that the full weight we pay for should be given. In the North-West of England each loaf is weighed when sold, and the deficit made up if short. But here, in the South, a shortage of four and a-half ounces to five and a-half ounces in the four-pound loaf was quite an everyday occurrence, and when complained of, the excuse made was that the four pounds of dough was weighed, but when it was objected that dough was not bread, then the same bread baked in a tin became fancy bread. After complaints and threatenings to go elsewhere, we got, for about three weeks, the full weight; then came a loaf five ounces short; and, when told, the man said that it was his fault; he had left our loaf at the wrong house. When I told the Inspector of Weights and Measures of this and another similar case, he said he could stop a load of coal and have it weighed and report if short, but had no order to weigh bread. His duty ended with the inspection of weights and measures. Why, Sir, should the law be properly enforced in the North of England and the Midlands and not in the South, and why should we pay inspectors and have to do their work? This shortage is a very serious matter for the labourer and middle-class man with a large family. In regard to milk, it is not only shortage of measure, as you mention, but cleanliness and freedom from artificial colouring matter which requires special attention. Why should annatto be mixed with pure milk to give it an apparent richness but for hiding the deficiency of cream? Quite recently I placed side by side two tall tumblers of milk, one coloured and one uncoloured, to show the cream on each after standing. The uncoloured showed the well-marked separation of cream, but the coloured was the same from top to bottom of the glass. This artificial colouring is treated, and properly so, as an adulteration in the North of England and Midlands, but here, in the South, there seems to be a rivalry for this nasty mixture. The milkman's "drop of annatto" must resemble his "drop of beer or whisky." The inspector tells me that I can demand uncoloured milk; but it is no part of his duty to see that the public are supplied with it. It is surely time that the hands of the inspectors were strengthened, and that Mr. John Burns's or some other Bill should be passed to make it imperative that all parts of England should receive the same treatment to ensure a supply of pure, unadulterated and clean milk from healthy, well-fed and clean cows. The mainstay of life to build up a strong, robust and muscular rising generation ought to command our serious attention. Liverpool may be taken as a pattern for the supply of pure, clean milk, and for the preservation of the lives of children under a year old, as well as of invalids whose principal food is milk.—T. S.

BIRDS IN A TOWN GARDEN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The interesting letter from "H." on "Tits and Cocoanuts" in last week's issue of COUNTRY LIFE has encouraged me to give my experience among the birds, if you will kindly find space for it. For some years past I have hung up cocoanuts and suet on a cedar near the house, and also put out a generous supply of Barcelona nuts—the favourite food of tits and nuthatches—on the window-sill of my bedroom. So soon as the shutters are taken down in the morning a little coquet appears at the window commanding the best view of my bed, and intimates very clearly that it is time I got up and fed him. He sits on a pear tree twig close to the wall, and peers into the room, and if no notice is taken he hovers just outside the glass as much as to say "I'm here; can't you see me?" or he will hang head downwards and go through acrobatic performances from the branches of the cedar, but on the slightest movement from my husband or myself he flies to the window, from which we dole out the nuts, and is off with one before you can say "Jack Robinson" (we take the shells off for the tits). He is closely followed by his wife, several great tits, a pair of nuthatches, blue tits and a very handsome cock chaffinch, our latest pensioner, who has discovered nuts are not bad food, and these come and go in quick succession as long as the food lasts. A few years ago I thought to try and tame these birds more thoroughly, so, leaving the window open, I placed the nuts on the inside sill and left the room. On returning later I found all the nuts had gone, and very soon the birds fed there quite naturally when I was in the room. I then tried putting a small table flush with the window-sill, and laid a train of nuts from one to the other. It took some days to accustom them to it.—HELEN FREER.

AN EXCELLENT BUTTER COW.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—From a dairy-wife's point of view, no breed of cows is to be compared with the Jersey, either for the quantity of milk it yields per day—from four to five gallons—or for richness of butter fat. An absurd idea prevails in villages

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that the Jersey is a very delicate type of dairy cow. This impression is quite wrong, for owing to constant breeding from healthy stock the breed is practically immune from tuberculosis. In Jersey all breeding stock are bound to undergo rigid veterinary inspection, while for the preservation of the purity of the breed great vigilance is exercised, and the utmost care is taken to prevent intermixture with foreign breeds. The richest milkers are generally highly-strung animals and of a nervous disposition; so if the Jersey is turned out "to rough it" during the bleak winter months, naturally it fails to compare favourably with some of the hardier kinds. However, with

careful treatment no cow shows up so well in the returns. It may interest readers to learn that in Jersey these cattle are tethered. This practice is resorted to on account of the luxurious growth of the grass. It has been ascertained that when tethered the animal will consume only one-fourth of the pasture necessary to its maintenance when loose. It is said that when crossed with other breeds the Jersey is capable of transmitting its dairy characteristics to its progeny; but the dairy-wife who prides herself on her excellent butter and desires to see her pans full of milk covered with layers of thick rich cream, should go in for Jerseys pure and simple.—G. W.



ON THE OPEN SNOWFIELD.

CHAMOIS ON THE SNOWFIELD.

[TO THE EDITOR.]
SIR,—The seventeen chamois were seen on the open snowfield on the top of the Tête à Bosset, the end spur of the Argentine range, near Villars, by Captain C. T. Dankes and myself while on a skiing expedition. They were crossing from the south slope of the Argentine range to the south slope of the Diablerets range. We first saw them about forty to fifty yards off, and photographed them about four hundred yards off while scrambling up the crusted south snow. (We used a Goerz Tenax, 5 by 4, F6.8; 1-75sec. on Premo film pack.) It is very unusual to find chamois together in anything like such numbers—unless driven; still

rarer to have the luck to see them on an open snowfield. They usually stick to the high south slopes of the hills, as the sun and the wind together clear the snow from the grass, whereas browsing is impossible lower down in deep snow. The "weathering" of the south slopes tends to make them more precipitous and rugged, which is another reason why one rarely sees the chamois in the open snowfields. Later on the same day we saw this same bunch of chamois again, when we were above them, and went after them for a short time on ski, but they had reached the tree-line before we quite got up to them.—E. C. PERY.



CHAMOIS CROSSING THE SLOPES.

AN OLD PRINT WANTED.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am writing a history of the Epsom Oaks, and so far have been unable to find an old print of The Oaks, late property of the fourteenth Earl of Derby. If you or your readers can tell me of any old book from which I can procure a small print of the house, of the same description as your Burford Manor print, in the issue of COUNTRY LIFE for March 4th, I shall be obliged. The print should be about five inches by four inches in size, at. 1750—1850, if possible.—R. H. CARLISLE.

WANTED—AN OLD-FASHIONED VILLAGE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Will any of your readers be good enough to give me the names of some old-fashioned villages in Kent and Worcestershire where there are farms with large cherry orchards—old ones if possible—preferably orchards where sheep and cattle graze under the trees. I want addresses of farm rooms or lodgings available in blossom-time, and also I should like to hear of a picturesque neighbourhood with chalk quarries now being worked.—ENQUIRER.

A GUILLEMOT FAR FROM THE SEA.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—On Saturday, March 11th, I had a fine specimen of the common guillemot, which was taken at Woodmancote (Gloucestershire), a small village near Cleve. Perhaps some of your readers could give a reason why this bird was found so far inland. It was feeding on a potato patch, and appeared uninjured.—I. C. WHITE.

[The guillemot was probably driven ashore by bad weather. A case is recorded as far back as January 7th, 1724-25, when Dr. Richardson, writing to Dr. Sherard, tells of a guillemot found fifty miles from sea. It was "alive, very brisk and in good feather."—ED.]

IN THE POCKET OF AN OVERCOAT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The old overcoat pocket in which this wren has built its nest is hung on a wall close to a large, horizontal log-sawing machine which is in one of the



A WREN'S ODD NEST.

factories. In spite of the constant vibration and passing to and fro of workmen, the wren has now returned to the coat for a number of years.—W. R. BUTLER.

GATEPOSTS.
[TO THE EDITOR.]
SIR,—In the "Agricultural Notes" of March 11th "E. W." in describing the making of concrete gateposts, gives the "aggregates," but unwittingly omits the "matrix," to use the professional terms. This in the last should, of course, be Portland cement—five of the first to one of the last. Permanent as these certainly would be, the cost as a substitute for the ordinary oak

THE CHAPEL OF THE PYX.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Your correspondent "C. G." in COUNTRY LIFE of February 11th, is not quite correct in stating that the Chapel of the Pyx in Westminster Abbey derives its name from the box in which the standards of weight and measure were kept. A pyx is a small box, generally of gold or silver, in which the Blessed Sacrament is carried to the sick and dying.—A. W. DOUGLAS.

["C. G." is perfectly correct. The Chapel of the Pyx is not concerned with the Blessed Sacrament. The word "pyx" is used even now to describe the box containing the coins annually examined by a jury of the Goldsmiths' Company, and this final official trial of the work of the Mint is still

described as the Trial of the Pyx. This secular sense of the word, moreover, dates back at least as far as 1598, when it was used by Stowe to describe a box of assay.—ED.]

GYF, A DEAF TERRIER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Mrs. Barry of Mere House, a beautiful residence at Tadworth in Surrey, is the happy possessor of one of the most interesting and intelligent little



APPROACHING THE MOLE.

terriers in the kingdom. The dog, for aught that is known, is only the second that will systematically hunt that queer, interesting creature the mole, and the other, strange to say, is one of the many puppies that the dog has bred. Gyp is the terrier's name, feminine is her gender, and deafness her peculiarity. Call to her at the top of your voice by the hour or, I may say, by the day, and she will rarely if ever hear you. Deaf Gyp was about two years of age when she took to the gentle and difficult art of catching moles, and ever since then "moling" has been her favourite diversion. One day, nine years ago, she happened to see her mistress throw a mole, that was working near the surface of the ground, out of a run with a small ratting spud—a most difficult thing for a lady to do—and from that time she began to evince an interest in moles. So now an attempt was made to teach her to catch the queer fellows. Almost everybody acquainted with the country-side knows that if you walk against the wind and very quietly you may sometimes get within a few inches of a mole tunnelling just below the surface of the ground. You see the surface being heaved up, and thus you detect the mole's presence. The least noise is disastrous. Breathe loudly, stumble, or crack a twig and the movement ceases immediately, and Mr. Mole retreats backwards at an extraordinary rate deep into the ground. At first Gyp would be carried to within a few feet of where a mole was busy, heaving up the surface, and be quietly put down. But in those days the dog was impatient, and sprang forward and began to dig with her paws, and the mole escaped. Next she would be made to stand still a few yards away while her instructor went forward and threw the mole (or tried to) out of the ground with a ratting spud. Once she had caught a mole unaided, she quickly acquired both the essential patience and cunning. Her manner of working is most interesting. Trotting forward, far ahead of the spectators, the moment that she winds her quarry—and she can scent a mole a good ten yards off, although he may be working some inches below the ground's surface—she is as silent as midnight. She stops and softly sniffs the air, and then goes on step by step and inch by inch, lifting each foot with such care, until she has arrived at the spot where her keen nose tells her the mole is at work; then she stands still, and there she remains, sometimes for ten or fifteen minutes, patiently watching and waiting for the moment to arrive for her to spring and catch the mole. When the latter is moving the surface of the ground quite violently, but not before, Gyp throws her weight on her hind legs, and the next fraction of a second her nose is buried in the ground, and a moment later the mole that a few minutes before was so busy tunnelling and feeding as he tunneled is dead, and Gyp is trotting away to find another little victim. The stealthy, silent stalk, the watching and waiting and the final stoop and spring constitute a spectacle as pretty as it is interesting. Many large sums of money have frequently been offered for this terrier and refused, for she is looked upon as priceless. Not all the silver and gold in the world would buy her. Money is cheap and plentiful, but such a dog exceedingly rare.—J. C. BRISTOW-NOBLE.



GYF RETRIEVING.